This is the fourth in the series of volumes which study the Muslim attitudes during the first half of the present century. Here is the documentary record of the Mosque incident at Kanpur, the struggle for power between radicals and moderates in Muslim League and the years of communal harmony in the country.

In Kanpur the Government decided to broaden a thoroughfare of a congested locality. This involved the demolition of a portion of a mosque. The Muslims agitated against this demolition. Mohammed Ali alongwith Wazir Hasan proceeded to England in a bid to present their case to the Secretary of State. But the Home Government declined to give them an audience. The failure of this mission has its aftermath which resulted in a crisis in Muslim League

Radicals had a hold over Indian Muslim League while moderates run the London Muslim League. Indian leaders wanted that the policy for Muslim League should be decided by the Indian branch. This was not acceptable to leaders like Ameer Ali and Aga Khan. The Kanpur mosque issue presented a tug of war between the radicals and the moderates and though the former could not come up with an over whelming majority, they continued to be a force in Muslim politics to which the moderates had sometimes to yield.

British attitude towards Muslims in Europe and Africa had strained the Anglo-Muslim relations. This naturally led to cordiality between Muslims and Hindus Jinnah in his Lucknow speech (1916) rejoiced over the settlement which set the seal on Hindu-Muslim cooperation and opened a new era in the history of the country. The British realised that Hindu-Muslim unity posed a great challenge to their rule. They tried to divide and rule and succeeded.

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THE INDIAN MUSLIMS

A Documentary Record of Muslim Struggle for Independence

(1900—1947)

VOLUME IV

MOSQUE INCIDENT, KANPUR AND COMMUNAL HARMONY

INTRODUCTION

At Kanpur, a mosque in the Machhli Bazar area became a bone of contention between Muslims and the Government. The Machhli Bazar mosque is situated on the A. B. Road and in the middle of the road stands a temple which considerably narrows down the passage. In view of the traffic difficulty, the Kanpur Municipality under the Kanpur Improvement Scheme, received in December 1908 from the Provincial Government, a sum of Rs. 2½ lakh for the purpose of broadening the thoroughfare of the congested areas. The Provincial Government had approved the scheme of widening the A. B. Road but it became a matter of much conflict as it involved the demolition of the temple which stood in the middle of the road. This naturally aroused the Hindu feeling and hence in view of the mounting tension the scheme was abandoned. A small curve in the road saved the situation. But still a wing of the road needed space for traffic movement and the Municipal committee now turned to the demolition of a portion of the mosque. The Government plan was to seize a small portion of the mosque and sanction some space on the other side of the mosque. This was much resented by Muslims. Representations were made to the Collector and the Lieutenant-Governor. The District Magistrate was adamant to demolish a portion of the mosque facing the road. He entered the mosque with his boots on and said that the part in question was not the integral part of the mosque as no Mussulman had prevented his entry in the mosque with boots on. The Chairman of the Municipal Board and the District Magistrate spoke in the same tone. The ulama declared that the acquired portion was the integral part of the mosque.

On 1 July 1913 mounted guards surrounded the various approaches to the mosque and dispersed the mob which had gathered there to check the demolition. The infuriated crowd, after a meeting having been called at Idgah, marched to the mosque with black flag and started rebuilding the demolished portion. The police had to open fire, causing the death of several Muslims on the spot. This act of sacrilege extremely excited the Muslims all over India and Maulana Mohammad Ali who was on the forefront of the whole episode wrote angrily in the *Comrade*: 'We owe a duty to Government, but we owe a duty to God as well, and let us assure the Government that those who will deny what is due to God would never render unto Caesar what is due to Caesar.'

Finding themselves helpless in their own motherland, Mohammad Ali and Syed Wazir Hasan, proceeded to England to represent the case of Indian Muslims to the Home Government, which had been through and through unfriendly to not only the Muslims in India but all over the world. Besides

Tripoli, Balkan and Morocco where Muslims were subjected to unbearable humiliation, the treatment with Indians in self-governing colonies like South Africa and Canada also occupied their mind. In association with Mr. Gokhale, Jinnah, Ameer Ali, Aga Khan and Khwaja Kamaluddin who were already in London they hoped to have a better audience and a considerable weight in presenting the Indian cause. Their efforts to seek interview with the Secretary of State and other British officials failed as the Home Government did not find any good out of this and all appeals were in vain.

Their mission was a failure and more disappointing was its aftermath which led to League crisis. A clash of views appeared between the London League and the All-India Muslim League on the question of policy. Ameer Ali and Aga Khan would not like any dictation from the All-India Muslim League on the question of policy and Ameer Ali reiterated that the London Muslim League would continue to occupy an independent position and he and the Aga Khan resigned from the London Muslim League. While Syed Wazir Hasan, the Secretary of the All India Muslim League, maintained that the policy of the Muslim League must be laid in India and nowhere else and that in the last resort the opinion of the All India Muslim League must prevail.

The crisis blackened the future of the All-India Muslim League and horrified the whole community. Ultimately in view of the pressure of the Muslim community from all over India, the Aga Khan and the whole body of the London Branch of Muslim League withdrew their resignations.

This crisis leads one to ponder as to what were the reasons which agitated and annoyed the London Branch of the Muslim League. Mosques were being demolished even before in Agra, Karachi, Saharanpur, Delhi and other places and the League took such issues before as well. But the sudden change of attitude in the League leadership was a matter which needed much apprehension. If one goes into the minute details one finds that differences of opinion had appeared between the All-India Muslim League and its London branch. The radical movement spearheaded by Maulana Mohammad Ali had dominated the thinking of the All-India Muslim League and this had led to a change of the League constitution in 1912. The cleavage between the moderates and radicals was thus inevitable. The London League which adhered to moderate principles would not like radicals to dominate the League. But the power had passed over to the radicals—a new generation had seized it and stood entirely on a different platform than the moderates.

The Government was aware of this. The changed tone of the *Comrade* was an eye-sore to the Government and W. H. Haily, Chief Commissioner of Delhi, wrote to H. Wheeler, Chief Secretary to Government of India that Mohammad Ali and others had raised up a 'Young Muslim Party' in Lucknow, Agra, Delhi and Lahore which was prepared to go to any length in opposing the Government.

The Kanpur mosque issue presented a tug of war between the radicals and the moderates and though the former could not come up with an overwhelming majority, they continued to be a force in Muslim politics to which the moderates had sometimes to yield.

Muslim repressionin Europe and Africa and lessening of Turkish influence in these continents resulted on the one hand in strained Anglo-Muslim relations and on the other Hindu-Muslim relations in India became cordial. It was for the first time that the two communities voiced the same sentiments. The British realised that Hindu-Muslim unity posed a great challenge to their rule.

When all this was going on the Turco-Italian and Balkan Wars strained Anglo-Muslim relations and further cemented the Hindu-Muslim friendship. This had a profound influence on Indian politics. The constitution of the All-India Muslim League was changed and the objectives of the League and Congress were now the same *i.e.*, the attainment of self-government for India. Jinnah who was a Congressite joined the League as well and a perfect concord was achieved. The *Comrade*, the *Al-Hilal* and the *Zamindar* of Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Zafar Ali respectively who dreamt of unity were now satisfied. The *Tribune* in its editorial praised both the communities and in appreciation wrote : 'Hindus and Mahommedans must stand or fall together and if the love of the motherland is a living reality for both Hindus and Mahommedans they will allow nothing to come between them.' This became true. Now the League and Congress sessions were held at one place and members of both the communities attended the sessions of each other and freely exchanged views. They even addressed the meetings of each other and thrashed out differences if any. The executive council of the League through a resolution condemned the wrong reporting of the *Pioneer* intended to mar the good relations of the two communities on the Farrukhabad riots issue.

The major bone of contention between the two communities had been the separate electorate. Since 1892 Muslims felt that they were under-represented. It was felt by them that the majority of electors were Hindus and they elected either the members of their own community or any pro-Hindu Muslims. As a result of this their best candidates were defeated. Professor B. B. Misra in his *Administrative History of India (1834–1947)* says 'As many as 45 per cent of the non-official members elected to Imperial Council since 1892 belonged to the professional Hindu middle class; the land-holders obtained 27 per cent of these seats, while the Mahommedans only 12 per cent against 23 per cent of their total population in the country. In Madras and U. P. no Mahommedan had succeeded in obtaining a seat by election between 1893–1906. The number of elective seats obtained by Mahommedans in Bombay during the same period did not exceed 11 per cent while in Bengal their percentage was 5·7'.

Their position in Government service was equally unsatisfactory as the Hindus had 2263 positions on a salary of Rs. 75 against the Muslims who had 283. This disparity persuaded them to demand the separate electorate which was granted to them in the Minto-Morley Reform scheme of 1909. But the Hindu opinion and the Congress did not accept it. As the years rolled by the Congress accepted the truth in Muslim demands and the Lucknow Pact of 1916 took it as a corner-stone of its policy. Now the main hurdle in Hindu-Muslim unity was surpassed and both the communities came closer as they had never been before. Mr. Jinnah describing the communal relation in

his Presidential speech to the ninth session of the All-India Muslim League in 1916 at Lucknow very rightly said : 'It is a matter of infinite gratification to me as well as to all patriotic Mussulmans that the Muslim communal position in this matter has been recognised and met in an ungrudging spirit by the leader of the great Hindu community. This was so amply demonstrated by the happy and unanimous decision that was arrived at by the committees of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League that they met at Calcutta only last November. Our joint conferences in Lucknow were marked by sincere efforts on either side to find lasting solution of our differences, and I rejoice to think that a final settlement has at last been reached which sets the seal on Hindu-Muslim cooperation and opens a new era in the history of our country.' This was a true assessment as Hindus and Muslims stood like a rock for quite sometime to oust imperialists. Because of this unassailable unity, the British tried various methods to divide and rule and ultimately they succeeded.

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MOSQUE INCIDENT, KANPUR

1

THE CAWNPORE SACRILEGE

It is with extreme reluctance and a deep sense of pain that we are obliged at last to publicly comment on the proceedings which have just culminated in the forcible demolition of a portion of a mosque at Cawnpore. We had hitherto refrained from publishing the facts and expressing our own views relating to this painful affair mainly for two reasons. In the first place we avoided consistently with our sense of public duty, doing anything that might add to the natural apprehensions of Moslems and excite their feelings still further as long as we had some hope that the grievance of the Cawnpore Moslems would be heard and redressed. Secondly, Mr. Mohamed Ali was in communication with His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces on the subject, and there was reason to hope that Sir James Meston would not allow the local authorities to ride roughshod over the religious susceptibilities of the Cawnpore Moslems as, indeed, of their co-religionists throughout India. We confess in both these respects we had built our hopes in vain. The Chairman of the Cawnpore Municipality has had his way in the teeth of local feeling. He has succeeded in despoiling the Cawnpore mosque of its eastern portion to make room for the road on which he had resolutely set his heart. We would be false to every instinct that we hold dear if we do not say it frankly that this act of sacrilege under Sir James Meston's Government—and after every effort had been made to acquaint the authorities with the Moslem standpoint—will cause intense indignation and dismay in Moslem India. Let us, however, first recapitulate the facts and describe the methods with which this reckless performance of the executive authority has been achieved.

Cawnpore, like every other pretentious city in India, had been dallying with Improvement Schemes for sometime past. In December 1908, the Provincial Government had allotted the sum of 2½ lakhs to the Cawnpore Municipality for the purpose of constructing 'broad thoroughfares and other works for the relief of congested areas in the city of Cawnpore in accordance with any scheme already sanctioned or that may hereafter be sanctioned by the Government.' Among such schemes was the construction of the A.B. road for which the approval of the Government was obtained on 7th April 1909, to the Cawnpore public, however, the alignment of the road remained for long a matter of conjecture not unmixed with apprehensions. If the road was to run straight in its course through the Machhli Bazar, a Hindu temple would have to be demolished, for the latter came right across such an alignment. We are

told an earlier scheme for the construction of the road contemplated the demolition of the temple. The feelings of the Hindus were naturally aroused, and it was rightly decided to leave the temple alone and deflect the road a little from its straight course. There is a mosque in the vicinity of the temple known as the Machhli Bazar Mosque, and Moslem apprehensions were aroused in turn lest in saving the temple the local authorities should sacrifice a portion of the mosque. Accordingly some representation to this effect, it would seem, was made to the Lieutenant-Governor on the occasion of his visit to Cawnpore in November last, for, according to a Cawnpore contemporary His Honour 'assured the members of the Municipality that the temple and the mosque will remain untouched by the Improvement Trust'. This declaration was accepted at its face value and allayed the anxiety of the Mussulmans who could have no idea that it would be made to bear a wholly novel interpretation, as we will show later on. The Chairman of the Municipal Board, however, soon decided in his mind what the declaration meant, and forthwith got the Improvement Trust Committee to pass a Resolution to the effect that the eastern portion of the mosque should be acquired and a plot to the north of the mosque be given in compensation. This Sub-Committee of the Board consists of five members, one of whom is a Mussulman, and we understand that the above decision was arrived at inspite of the Moslem member's remonstrance. When the decision came up before the Board for confirmation a member wished to raise the question of whether the building should be acquired at all. But 'he was ruled out of order', says the Chairman of the Municipality in his letter to the District Magistrate, dated 4th April 1913, 'on the ground that the only question before the Board was the question of land to be given in compensation, the acquisition of the building having been previously decided upon by the Board.'

Now, this bold assertion of the Chairman, that the acquisition of the building had been previously decided upon by the Board, is worth considering. We may be sure there was no resolution in the Board's records authorising the acquisition of that particular building, for had there been any such resolution in existence the Chairman would have most certainly brandished it forth as his most convenient weapon. One of the resolutions which he quotes in support of his argument refers in general terms to a Trust deed, vesting in the Board as Trustees the sum of 2½ lakhs granted by the Government for the purpose of constructing 'broad thoroughfares and other works for the relief of congested inhabited areas in the city of Cawnpore'. This does not surely mean that the Board had been eternally relieved of its responsibility to consider any particular scheme of road construction that might be fathered upon it. As regards the Boards' resolution of 20th April 1909, passed on receipt of the government approval regarding the scheme for the construction of the A.B. road, it was reserved for the Chairman of the Cawnpore Municipality to lay down the novel proposition, that a member has no right to call into question any particular part of a scheme which the Board happens to

approve in general outline. The members of the Board did not know exactly what particular buildings were to be acquired for the alignment of the A.B. road. Moreover, we are told the map of the proposed alignment did not show the portion of the mosque to be acquired. Again, the members not conversent with English, could not study the map with any profit. It is curious that the decision of the Improvement Trust Committee was arrived at on the 12th February 1913, *i.e.*, about a year and a quarter *after* the Land Acquisition Officer had reported that 'only a corner of the mosque (*lately added to it for a bathing place*) is to be taken in exchange for a like piece to be given when the houses round it have been demolished'. The words we have italicised represented, by the way, a myth that along with some others has strangely persisted throughout the official explanations and apologies relating to this case. But to return to the note recorded by the Land Acquisition Officer, we would like to know how he came to concern himself with the question of acquiring the eastern portion of the mosque when the Sub-Committee had evidently not yet made up its mind till the 13th February 1913. He was presumably acting under instructions from some quarters. Had the inspiration come from the Chairman ? If so, it was the Chairman who ought to have explained his method of treating a serious public matter, which he had every reason to know intimately touched the feelings of an important section of the community. The Chairman states in his letter to the Collector that no voice was raised against the acquisition of the building 'until the adjoining Hindu temple was saved'. We do not know which to admire more—the farcical hollowness of the plea or the clumsy insinuation that it serves to convey without little attempt at disguise. As a matter of fact, there were only two alternative alignments for the road in question. Either it could be made to run straight by pulling down the temple, or it must take a curve by running through a portion of the mosque. As long as the temple was supposed to be threatened, the mosque was naturally believed to be safe. And it was only after the temple had been declared to be entirely immune from the operations of the Improvement Trust that Moslems could reasonably be apprehensive as to the safety of the mosque. Yet the Chairman seems to accuse them of a sad failure to agitate when there was no danger in sight. Was the rumour about the fate of the Hindu temple intended to serve as a feint ? If so, the Moslems were completely outmanoeuvred. They are only just perceiving, alas ! to their cost that they were perhaps dealing with tacticians of the first order in their unequal fight for a sacred cause. The insinuation that Mussulmans suddenly discovered a grievance after the 'the Hindu temple was saved' and were moved by religious rivalry is as mischievous as it is false. The only grateful feature in this sorry affair has been the entire absence of Hindu-Moslem question, and the Cawnpore Moslems will be the first to acknowledge the help they received from the majority of the Hindu members of the Municipality. We think we have sufficiently exposed the assertion that Moslem feeling over the question was merely an after thought. If any doubt

is still felt on this score it will be totally dispelled when it is remembered that no notice for the acquisition of the eastern portion of the mosque was served on the *Mutawalli* along with other such notices issued to house-owners. The question of the exchange of land was only a suggestion to be settled by mutual arrangement. The only conclusion that we are led to draw is that the demolished portion of the mosque was not included in the original scheme. Even the Land Acquisition Officer referred merely to 'a corner lately added to it as a bathing place' and not to the *dalan* which along with 'the corner' has been rased to the ground.

But to resume the thread of the narrative. As we have already said, a member objected to the acquisition of a portion of the mosque in a meeting of the Board, but was ruled out of order by the Chairman. Thereupon a requisition signed by ten members including six Hindu members was sent to the Chairman that the following resolution be put on the Agenda :

'From the proceedings of the Improvement Trust Committee that came before the Board at its meeting held on 4th March 1913, and that were confirmed by the Board at the meeting on the 8th March 1913, to which a protest by a member of the Board was ruled out of order, the Board has come to know that a portion of the building of the mosque in Machhli Bazar is being acquired for the purpose of the A.B. road. Resolved that the contemplated acquisition being objectionable on religious grounds and being contrary to the spirit of the declaration made by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on the 13th November 1912, the Board is of opinion that the said portion of the mosque should not be acquired 'and that any previous resolutions of the Board directly or impliedly approving of such acquisition be cancelled.'

The Resolution was duly moved at the meeting of the Board held on 1st April 1913. An amendment was proposed and seconded to the effect 'that a recommendation may be sent to the Government requesting that no portion of the mosque on the A.B. road be acquired in deference to the feelings of Mahommedan community'. The Chairman proposed and Mr. Ryan seconded another amendment, that no action be taken on the proposed resolution, but it was supported only by four European members. The first amendment was supported by 13 votes, and was carried, the original motion having been withdrawn in its favour. However, the Chairman in his letter to the Collector said that he was unable to recommend the resolution even in its amended form. To leave the portion of the mosque standing would, in his opinion, 'add an impossible disfigurement to the street'. His passion for geometrical symmetry would have been a little credible if he had insisted on a straight, unbending road even at the expense of the Hindu temple. The curve is nothing but a concession—and a very proper and desirable concession—to Hindu feeling. Did the aesthetic perceptions of the Chairman and the soul of his PWD rebel all of a sudden when it came to the question of saving the mosque by a slight diminution in the width of the street ? Was the loss of symmetry with little loss of utility a consequence much more dire and 'impossi-

ble' than the outraged feelings of a large community ? If this is the measure of the new dispensation that fills the air with a loud faith in 'sanitary Reform', India were best rid of the reformers and their new-fangled enthusiasms.

Before the amended resolution was adopted by the Board in its meeting of the 15th April 1913, the District Magistrate had appeared actively on the scene. His first act is said to have been that he went to inspect the mosque and entered its eastern portion with his boots on. When he came out of the mosque he is alleged to have said that part in question was not an integral portion of the mosque in as much as no Mussulman had prevented him from walking with his boots on over the places. This is surely as conclusive an argument as that of the coxcombs who silenced Berkeley with a grin. According to this atrocious process of reasoning the Jami' Masjid of Delhi is no longer a place of Moslem worship as Europeans are in the habit of treading its court-yard without taking off their boots or even without putting on a covering. We are pained to think that such a joke can be perpetrated with such levity, and we are still more pained at the spectacle of Moslem imbecility which alone can tolerate it. When the Cawnpore Moslems had their eyes opened by the Collector's joke, they held a meeting in the mosque and desired five of their eminent ulama to give their verdict on the question. The ulama gave their formal *fatwa* according to which it was declared that the eastern part was an integral portion of the mosque. 'The Moslem law forbids the selling or giving in exchange of a mosque or any portion thereof. Consequently the proposed exchange of the eastern *dalan* is contrary to the law of *Shari'at*'. Shortly after this a deputation of the Moslems waited on the Collector with a view to lay before him their grievance and the express religious injunctions on which it was based. But the Collector refused to be convinced by such arguments.

The only course now left open to the Cawnpore Moslems was to appeal to the Lieutenant-Governor if the mosque was to be saved. Accordingly they submitted a memorial to His Honour through the Hon. Mr. Shahid Husain, Barrister-at-Law of Lucknow, on 12th April 1913, briefly setting forth the facts of the case. They stated that the District Magistrate had expressed his unwillingness to save the eastern portion of the mosque from demolition and pointed out that 'the intended acquisition is a direct encroachment upon our religious rights and opposed to the accepted policy of our Government.' They humbly requested His Honour 'to stop the said acquisition and save the mosque from being partially demolished.' The Under-Secretary to the Government of the United Provinces acknowledged the receipt of the memorial on the 6th May, and in the course of his reply said :

'The Lieutenant-Governor has carefully considered the representation of the memorialists, and after ascertaining the facts of the case from the local authorities has decided that the proposed alignment of the road—which is the same as that originally selected for this road—must be maintained. His Honour guaranteed that the mosque should not be interfered with, but the washing

place is not part of the sacred building, and when a similar point arose in connection with the Lucknow improvements, the Mahommedans assented to another washing place being given them in place of one which was required for public purposes. The present washing place must, therefore, be removed. The authorities of the mosque will be asked to choose another site on which a washing place will be built for them by the Municipal Board.'

Now, it is obvious that His Honour had guaranteed that 'the mosque should not be interfered with'. The local authorities, however, had begun the interference immediately after this guarantee was given at Cawnpore. But in order to avoid any apparent violation of His Honour's plighted word they invented the ridiculous myth that the eastern portion of the mosque was not a part of the sacred building. They had early begun to refer to it as a mere 'corner', 'a building lately attached', 'a washing place', 'a bathing place' and so forth. The supreme issue is whether the demolished part is or is not an integral portion of the mosque. The local authorities had decided that it was not. And we regret His Honour readily accepted this decision without consulting authoritative Moslem opinion on the subject. Neither the Chairman of the Cawnpore Municipality, nor the District Magistrate, nor again the Land Acquisition Officer has ever presumed to set himself up as an authority on Moslem Law and Moslem theology. The only men whose opinion must be decisive in this case are Moslem ulama and lawyers. Were any such Moslems ever consulted by the local authorities or even by Sir James Meston himself? The *fatwa* we have quoted above ought to be a sufficient indication of the views of Moslem religious leaders, who alone are competent to pronounce on the question. According to this *fatwa*, the *dalan* is an integral portion of the mosque. Those who hold the contrary view are neither Moslem ulama nor even persons whose opinions on matters of Moslem religion can be entitled to weight. They are simply enamoured of their views and conscious of their power to carry those views into effect. It is rather hard to think that question of great religious delicacy and import involving the fate of a Moslem place of worship, are thus lightly disposed of on the strength of the *fatwas* of erratic Municipal Chairman and dogmatic District Magistrates. We may state here with emphasis that the *dalan* was not a portion 'lately added' to the mosque as alleged, and it is worth remembering that it had always been used for prayers whenever there was uncommonly large congregation.

What happened after the reply to the memorial was received may be briefly told. In a meeting of the Board held on the 20th May a resolution was moved to the effect that 'the Board recommends that the Government be pleased to reconsider its decision'. The Chairman proposed an amendment that no further representation be made by the Board and that the Government order be accepted as final. This amendment could alone be carried by the Chairman's casting vote. Another memorial was sent some time after to the Lieutenant-Governor in which the whole case was argued at considerable length. But as far as we are aware no reply has been received to this

memorial. On 30th June Sir James Meston visited Cawnpore and inspected the Machhli Bazar Mosque. The Mussulmans felt that His Honour's visit would lead to an amicable settlement of the matter. Their hope was, however, doomed to cruel disappointment on the morrow. Early in the morning on the lst July the mosque was surrounded by a large force of the police with fixed bayonets, who guarded the various approaches to the mosque. To quote from the telegram sent by the Cawnpore correspondent of the *Poineer*, 'it soon became evident that the authorities intended to carry out the demolition of that portion which stood in the way of the new road. Mounted police patrolled the neighbouring streets and kept moving the crowd which had gathered. The demolition was carried out in the presence of Mr. HGS Tyler, District Magistrate, who along with several police officers was present on the spot. After demolition the mosque was visited by several thousand Mahommedans during the day, including a large number of mill hands'. Our own correspondent informs us that a huge mass meeting of the Mussulmans was held at I'dgah in the evening of that day and the following telegram was sent to H.E. the Viceroy :

'The following resolution passed by Cawnpore Mahommedans to-day in a general meeting to inform Your Excellency that unprecedented sacrilege of Cawnpore Machhli Bazar Mosque by authorities with the aid of armed police, without waiting for the result of memorial submitted to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor. Proceedings illegal and unknown since British Rule in India. Excitement greatest. Request intervention and restoration of the sacred building in the same place.'

II

Last week we have, for the first time, referred to a matter which had been exercising many of our Urdu contemporaries for weeks and have explained, in the course of our comments on the Cawnpore sacrilege, the reasons for our own silence. It may possibly be considered to be no part of a journal's duty—and in fact contrary to it—to carry on an argument with the government in private, while withholding the controversy, and even the facts of the case, from the public. But we have no belief in mere conventions; and, considering the position of the people and the Government in this country, we prefer to be guided by the needs of the situation rather than the precepts and the practice of journalism in other countries. But we confess success has not always attended our policy. Government officials, while only too anxious to suppress newspaper agitation against their pet policies and measures, indirectly invite newspaper agitation themselves, and teach the public to distrust efforts made behind the scenes to remove friction between the Government and the peoples. In connection with the Cawnpore sacrilege the *Pioneer*, that submissive handmaiden of the Services, writes of 'the artificial agitation which has been industriously fanned in some of the Moslem

newspapers'. Evidently what the *Pioneer* does not know is not knowledge, and, to quote one instance only, it writes as if the neighbouring Hindu temple is not being spared—and rightly—in deference to the remonstrances of the Hindus, stating that 'it does not interfere with the alignment of the new road'. This is we suppose chiefly because it is right in the centre of the new road. But even if this ill-informed and misinformed journal had a ray of the light of non-official knowledge thrown on its editorial penetralia, we doubt whether it would have had the honesty and the courage to publish facts as they are. If the Moslem newspapers have written a line the Mussulmans of Cawnpore have pressed them to write ten columns on the subject of their grievance, and it is a lie—in spite of the fact that it is an Anglo-Indian paper that gives currency to it that the agitation has been artificial one and owes its origin or any of its intensity to Moslem newspapers.

For our part, we had been repeatedly pressed by a large number of visitors from Cawnpore, not to mention urgent requests by post and wire, to write on the subject; but as the correspondence with His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, which we published last week, shows, we preferred to allay such excitement as already prevailed among the Mussulmans rather than add to it by airing the grievance of the Cawnpore Mussulmans, and we trusted that if no one else would appreciate our desire to settle this matter, so to speak, out of court, at least His Honour Sir James Meston would do it. But such appreciation, to be of any use, should have been shown in action rather than in words, and to the last we pinned our faith to the sagacity and statesmanship of Sir James Meston. But now that the sacrilege has been committed, and apparently under his orders, or at least with his approval, and we ruminate over all we felt and thought and did during the six weeks preceding the sacrilege, we confess we regret that we did not lead a public agitation against the proposed action of Messrs. Sim and Tyler six weeks ago. It is much to acquire the good opinion of one of the Characters and attainments of Sir James Meston; it is still more to acquire a general reputation for allaying rather than creating excitement in a country where excitement is only too often apt to result in a breach of peace. But even now, after having patiently represented to him the Moslem point of view time after time in private letters and telegrams rather than commenting publicly on the affairs, we are not sure that we shall retain the good opinion of Sir James Meston, or convince a single bureaucrat that we have in any way assisted the friends of law and order. It is at times such as this that one is tempted to follow the lead of Bengal journalism, for it has all the 'sixpences' of the profession and none of the 'kicks'. These the bureaucracy keeps in reserve as a reward for those who have a weakness for official susceptibilities.

Sir James Meston has acknowledged both the temperateness and the appropriateness of our request for a reconsideration of his decision, and the fairness and friendliness as well as the frankness with which we approached him in this matter. We can do no less than to acknowledge the great courtesy which

has characterized Sir James's replies to our letters and telegrams. But in spite of the extreme polish of his phrases and a manner which is entirely his own, we have never had any difficulty in understanding the true import of Sir James's words, so that it is bare justice to add that his courtesy never disguised his frankness. But greateful as we are to him for having taken such pains to make his own view of the matter clear, we confess what has been served before us has tickled our palate far more than it has satisfied the appetite of the Mussulmans of Cawnpore.

In one particular, however, even the taste in the mouth has not been pleasant. We certainly never expected after all this courtesy that the reply to our letter of the 9th June would be sent by His Honour a day after the accomplishment of that against which we had so earnestly pleaded. We acknowledge that the letter of the editor of a newspaper is not entitled to the same consideration that the petition of Udai Patni for mercy deserved but did not receive. But we wonder if there was a 'forty-eight hours' rule' or some similar doctrine of bureaucratic ethics which prevented any greater consideration being paid by Sir James Meston to a memorial submitted in person by the famous Taluqdar of Sitapur than had been paid by his predecessor to the petition for mercy submitted by the infamous zemindars of the same district ? Sir James's courtesy has been unable, even if it has ever attempted, to disguise his firm beliefs that what the officials say must be unreservedly accepted that what the officials desire to do must receive the backing of the head of the Indian Civil Service in the Province, and that the best policy to deal with Moslem feeling is to teach the Mussulmans their proper place in an official cosmology where in the Anglo-Indian at one time refused to occupy any place but the first, and after the sagacious and cheerful acceptance of the inevitable by the New Statesmanship equally persistently refuses to occupy any place lower than the second'. Evidently the Moslem 'nuisance' was discussed in the highest circles recently and Sir James's view prevailed. The Cawnpore sacrilege may, therefore, be taken to be the first of a series of lessons which the undisciplined Moslem is to be taught, and it therefore mattered little whether a mere news paper received a back number as an official reply to the advance copy of a non-official supplication, or the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad was shocked out of a beautiful dream of promises.

We have seen how Sir James has treated our request. But let us examine the request itself for a moment. We asked for no immediate orders accepting the resolution passed by the Municipal Board on the 1st April to spare the mosque and rejecting the proposal of the Municipal Chairman and his three supporters not one of whom was either a Hindu or a Mussulman. We trusted that Sir James at least would not make such a hollow mockery of local self-government in the one town of the United Provinces where business flourished most and the Municipal Board is most likely to be composed of men of business. All that we had requested His Honour to do was to suggest a 'consultation with Moslem ulama and lawyers before further action is taken'.

In His Honour's own words, this was a 'very temperate and appropriate request', but it remained unheeded just the same. Sir James did not think that this agitation was 'based on a genuine religious grievance'. The matter did not contain 'any element of doubt'. The outcry was 'belated' and Mr. Sim, the Chairman of the Municipality, had given evidence which was considered 'definite', and its correctness was 'unreservedly accepted'. When the demolition on which Mr. Sim had set his heart had become an accomplished fact and could be presented to the Mussulmans as one more 'final' decision, we are assured that the matter had been 'reconsidered with much care, and in consultation with many visitors of all classes'. This is the worst feature of secret consultations that no one is permitted to judge whether the 'visitors of all classes' contained any but seekers after titles which official almoners distribute so lavishly as a largest among toadies just as willing to sell government as they are to sell their own consciences and their communities. But in a matter such as this we cannot conceive that any person with the least claim to be consulted advised His Honour to defy the Municipal Board, defy the Mussulmans of Cawnpore, defy the whole of Moslem India and defy the law of Islam and the law of the land which has secured to the Mussulmans of India the undisturbed observance of their Personal Law. Will His Honour favour the Mussulmans with the names of those of their co-religionists whom he chose to consult and who supported his decision ?

But what is the use of re-considering with much care and in consultation with many visitors of all classes orders which Sir James Meston himself tells us were already 'final so far as I was concerned' ? We should have thought that His Honour would regard it as a compliment to himself that, instead of approaching, or being advised to approach, a higher authority, the Mussulmans of Cawnpore went to him, and were sent to him, one more with a humble memorial. If the Hon. Mr. Shahid Hussain had failed, it was hoped that the Hon. the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad would succeed. When the second memorial was taken to Sir James Meston to Simla by the Raja Saheb in person, every effort was made to keep the matter out of the papers—every lie that the *Pioneer* may invent to the contrary notwithstanding. Will the Raja Saheb now tell us whether he was not re-assured by His Honour only a few days before the sacrilege was ordered ? Did he leave Sir James with the conviction that his orders were final and would no more bear an alteration than the laws of the Medes and Persians, or did he return with hopes of an amicable settlement ? The Raja Saheb owes it to the community that unreservedly followed him to explain all that took place, and Sir James Meston owes it to him to explain whether His Honour had given him any assurance or encouragement. It matters little in comparison how we were treated in the matter; but Government can ill afford to place one in the position of Raja Sir Ali Muhammad Khan in so embarrassing a situation.

Even assuming that Sir James's orders were final, they were, as His Honour himself says, final only 'so far as I was concerned'. It is true that

His Excellency the Viceroy has not hitherto condescended even to acknowledge the telegraphic appeals addressed to him. But it is not always in this manner that the Government of India treats the decisions of Local Governments. The Governnent of His Excellency Lord Carmichael has not recently met with the same good fortune, and if there is any sense and purpose in the subordination of all Local Governments to the Supreme Government, then surely Sir James Meston owed it to the Governor-General in Council as much as to the Mussulmans to tell them clearly and frankly that his orders were final, and to give them an opportunity of appealing against them to the Government of India before he ordered the sacrilege.

Surely Sir James Meston could not have thought, like the *Pioneer*, that 'with the action taken by the Magistrate of Cawnpore on Tuesday morning in the matter of the Machhli Bazar mosque we shall have heard the last of an affair of which a good (sic) too, much has been said already.' He ought to know, even if he does not, that a Moslem can pray practically everywhere and under all circumstances. Forty thousand Tylers and Sims cannot prevent that. But the principle cannot be so lightly sacrificed that not an inch of ground dedicated to the worship of the One God of Islam can be given up for any other purpose so long as there is a single True Believer who holds his life as a feather's weight in the scale against the everlasting and exalted commandments of the Giver of all Life. 'To deflect the road or to allow the *dalan* to project into it', to quote Sir James Meston himself, 'would in itself have been a small matter.' That this was not done was not because Mussulmans do not agree 'to discriminate between the big things and the small, but because more than a century and a half after the battle of Plassey even the best of Englishmen are so woefully deficient in discriminating between the big things and small according to the Moslem scale of values. Sanitary roads and the prestige of Mr. Sim are not matters of conscience where no deflection is possible and no projection can be allowed to remain. If the full observance of his faith is permitted to every Moslem subject of His Majesty by law and by Royal Proclamation, then no orders contrary to that are final, and His Honour is certainly mistaken if he thinks that without rebuilding the demolished portion of the Cawnpore mosque he can remove 'any feeling of soreness' by his visit to Cawnpore next month. He has to deal with something far graver and far more deeply felt, namely, the universal apprehension that nothing is too sacred where official prestige is concerned. We owe a duty to Government, but we owe a duty to God as well, and let us assure Government that those who will deny what is due to God would never render unto Caesar what is due to Caesar. Sir James Meston can yet retrace his steps by restoring the demolished portion of the mosque himself; and we hold it even nobler to acknowledge an error and rectify it than not to have erred at all. But if this sort of valour is regarded as the better part of discretion, and obstinacy is flaunted as firmness, 'then goodbye to the usefulness of government', at least to the usefulness of Sir James Meston's government. The Mussulman will

then have to appeal to powers higher than Sir James and to put their trust in God—the final source of all power and One in Whom none has ever placed his trust in vain.

We are tempted to discuss the details of the affair no further, because it is clear from the action already taken that His Honour attaches little value to any evidence other than the *ipse dixits* of Mr. Sim, the correctness of which he unreservedly accepts. But we are unwilling to give way to such a temptation, and shall discuss the details of the affair still further in our next. In the meantime let us assure Sir James Meston that Cawnpore Mussulmans are prepared to disprove the story retailed to His Honour that before or after obliging Mr. Tyler by permitting him to walk into the mosque with his shoes on and create evidence against themselves, the Mussulmans of Cawnpore obliged Mr. Sim still further by themselves crowding into the mosque in company with him in the same manner. If Mr. Sim has any pretentions to tell the truth, he must shame the unnameable forthwith by telling us when he had the honour of desecrating the Cawnpore mosque, and who were his companions in the sinful act. All cannot equally unreservedly accept his *ipse dixit*.

In the next place, let us assure Sir James Meston that he is evidently misinformed if he is led to believe that even in the days of Mr. Campbell and Sir John Hewett the demolition of the mosque was decided upon and not of the temple. As a matter of fact it is just the other way. Well may the Mussulmans of Cawnpore say :

He draws the bow in the direction of others,
But strikes the arrow on our life.
Oh the coquetry, that with mischief and deftness
He aims at one and strikes at the other !

If the Cawnpore authorities are sure of their facts why do they not publish all the papers in the connection ? Why do they refuse to give the Cawnpore Mussulmans a copy of the map showing the original alignment of the A. B. road ? Why do they not produce the resolution of the Municipal Board of a date anterior to the 4th of March 1913, sanctioning the demolition of the mosque, and why do they not publish a copy of the notice served on the *mutawallis* of the mosque in accordance with the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act bearing an earlier date than the irregular notice issued on the 29th June ?

We know what we write about, but of one thing we must emphatically say we are certain, and it is this that we shall not sit unmoved if the usual *zabardasti* tactics of the UP are resorted to and any undue pressure is brought to bear on the *mutawallis* of the Cawnpore mosque to accept a price for a sacrilege that concerns every Moslem subject of His Majesty. Having failed to tempt them with offers of making the mosque 'an ornament to the road and the Bazar', are the authorities of Cawnpore bent on making the Mussulmans jealous of the Hindus ? In this matter the Hindus have earned the gratitude of

the Mussulmans by giving them every reasonable support in the teeth of Mr. Sim's headstrong opposition, and the Mussulmans would merit every opposition from the Hindus if, after all this, they give way to jealousy so sedulously sought to be created by means of letters addressed to the *mutawallis* which appear to be inspired and which we have reason to believe are written, or at least dictated by hirelings. Many of these have been sent to the Hon. the Raja Saheb and two of them are at this moment before us. The *mutawallis* are exhorted to strike a bargain with the authorities immediately 'lest the adjoining land now offered for the extension of the mosque be given to the Hindus for a temple'. To our mind it would be preferable to worship the God of Islam in the temple rather than on a piece of land given as the price of an insult offered to Islam. We have heard a good deal about the mistaken belief of the people that the British policy is to 'divide and rule'. If Sir James Meston would like to root out this mistaken notion from the minds of the people let him look a little more closely into the tactics of Cawnpore and the mean and mischievous letters circulated with such unusual assiduity. It will be by such resolute action that he will best prove his desire to unite the Hindus and Mussulmans.

III

The Indignation and alarm that the demolition of a portion of the Machhli Bazar Mosque in Cawnpore has aroused throughout Moslem India has drawn forth a Press Communique from the United Provinces Government. The Communique is a tissue of curious statements. But before we make any comment we would like to reproduce the following extracts :

'Considerable excitement appears to have been aroused in Mahommedan circles in connection with the removal on the 1st of July of a small building attached to what is known as the Machhli Bazar Mosque in Cawnpore. The All-India Moslem League are memorializing Government on the subject; and we hear of meetings and protests in various parts of the country. It is probable that the true facts of the case are not exactly known even to some of the organizations from which protests are now emanating; and in Cawnpore itself there is comparatively little excitement among the Mahommedan community on the subject. What has actually happened seems to be this. In the course of the much needed municipal improvement scheme at Cawnpore, a project was matured and sanctioned for running a new road through the densely populated area between Moulganj and the Dufferin Hospital. The intention to take up the necessary lands and buildings was duly notified as far back as November 1909; and the land plans were deposited for public inspection in the Collector's office. The plans indicated that a temple known as the Teli's temple would be removed, and also the outer or eastern courtyard of the Machhli Bazar Mosque, which is not far from the temple.... In November last when the Lieutenant-Governor was at Cawnpore, he visited the ground and,

after an informal discussion with the municipal members, announced that the new road would be splayed in such a way as to spare the temple....

'At the time of this decision some Mahommedan gentlemen asked whether the effect of it would be to destroy the mosque, and they were assured that this would not be the case. On the contrary, it was so arranged that the alignment of the road would spare the courtyard in its entirety instead of cutting off a piece of its as had been originally intended. The only portion of the mosque premises which would then be affected would be a narrow projection used as a washing-place on the extreme north-east of the main courtyard.... Towards the end of March letters began to appear in some of the newspapers, protesting against any interference with the mosque premises whatever; and a petition was sent up to the Local Government asking that the eastern portion of the mosque should not be acquired and destroyed....

'Some of the protests which have since been pouring in appear to suggest that the whole of the mosque has been desecrated, or even demolished. The truth is that a small building which projected from the eastern wall of the mosque across the alignment of the new road is all that has been removed.... It has been urged in some of the protests that the building was of equal sanctity with the rest of the mosque. The best comment on this is the fact that when the Chairman of the Board went to visit the building, the Mahommedans who accompanied him entered it with their shoes on, and a pile of shoes was seen lying on the platform inside....'

Shorn of its mass of verbiage, we find that the Communique seeks to justify the action of the Cawnpore authorities by one main assumption, which even constant iteration does not seem to state. Throughout this painful affair the one official plea has been that the demolished portion of the mosque is not its integral part, and that its removal does no violence to the sanctity of the real place of worship. Now, in the name of all that is reasonable, will there be no honest effort made to arrive at the truth and ascertain what a mosque means according to the Islamic law ? Will a myth invented by local officialdom continue to be used as the most effective weapon with which to confound the Mussulmans ? Are the opinions of the Moslem ulama, Moslem lawyers and the clearest and most emphatic injunctions of the sacred *shariat* of Islam to be swept into the dustbin because Mr. Tyler is pleased to think otherwise ? The only official proof that the demolished portion is not as sacred as the rest of the mosque lies in the infallible testimony of Mr. Sim, 'When the Chairman of the Board (Sim) went to visit the building', says the communique, 'the Mahommedans who accompanied him entered it with their shoes on, and a pile of shoes was seen lying on the platform inside.' This is the bedrock of official argument, the incontrovertible proof of the part being less sacred or perhaps not sacred at all, and the Local Government seems to feel as if by quoting Mr. Sim it has finally disposed of Moslem grievance and the deep feeling it has aroused throughout the country. Is Mr. Sim to be the final authority on all matters relating to Moslem places of worship ? Even

if Mr. Sim's statement is correct, the shoe-test invented by him is ridiculous. The mere taking off shoes into any portion of the mosque does not divest it of its sacred character, and Mr. Sim ought to have known that Mussulmans are invariably in the habit of taking their shoes in their hands when entering the mosque and piling or placing them at some convenient place inside. What is, however, still more to the point, Mr. Sim's statement has been directly challenged by the Cawnpore Moslems and its accuracy has been categorically denied. A number of responsible Mussulmans wrote a formal letter to Mr. Sim requesting him to state the day and the occasion when he entered the mosque accompanied by Mussulmans, who went in with their shoes on as alleged. Mr. Sim, after more than a week, replied that 'in view of the circumstances that have arisen, I regret that I do not see my way to comply with your request'. We do not know what those circumstances are which prevent Mr. Sim from proving the accuracy of his statement. He ought to know that his allegation fixes the entire responsibility of the matter on him. As a matter of fact, his testimony is the chief point on which the decision of the Local Government has been ostensibly based. It is, therefore, his duty as a public servant to prove his assertion, which has led to such serious consequences.

The obvious duty of the Local Government in the circumstances was to consult Moslem opinion in a matter affecting the Moslem religious sentiment and not to proceed on the unverified assertions of Mr. Sim. That duty appears to us to have been most unaccountably shirked. And now that the storm of protest and indignation is rising throughout Moslem India, refuge is being sought behind strange pretexts and novel assumptions The Communique says that 'in Cawnpore itself there is comparatively little excitement among the Mahommedan community over the subject'. All that we can say is that the assertion is absolutely devoid of the fact. We have yet to know of a masterful and autocratic official who, after riding roughshod over popular feelings, has not declared aloud that there is absolute quiet and peace in the world he surveys. You may plant an iron heel and call it order, just as you may dub all genuine distress and cry an aritificial agitation. Those who are industriously seeking to misrepresent the real facts by telling the Local Government that all is quiet in Cawnpore, are betraying both the Government and the people. If the monster meeting held by the Cawnpore Moslems on the 23rd July, which was attended by thousands inspite of the bad weather, cannot be an expression of the real feelings of Cawnpore Moslems, then it may safely be concluded that no form of protest within constitutional limits stands a chance of being heard. The Communique itself makes an indirect incitement to agitation, and we shudder to think of the consequences to which the ostrich-like officials may succeed in driving the Cawnpore Mussulmans.

Source **: The Comrade, 5, 12 July and 2 August, 1913.**

2

LETTER FROM MOHAMMED ALI TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

I have already written to Your Honour at only too great a length on Aligarh affairs and now trouble you once more on the Cawnpore Mosque. The matter has already been noticed by several Urdu papers, and I fear others will take it up immediately. I am somewhat doubtful, as a rule, of the 'effect of writings in the vernacular Press on Government officials whose knowledge of the vernaculars is generally poor, and my arrangement is that what is intended for Government should appear in the *Hamdard.* I therefore, never contemplated to write in the *Hamdard* on the subject as such writings have a tendency to excite a certain class of people without any compensating effect on Government, but in Your Honour's case it is different, for you are well able to read Urdu papers for yourself.

But to turn to the Cawnpore question. I would certainly have written in the *Comrade* on the subject had it not been that I hoped and still hope, to obtain the same result, and a satisfactory result, without raising a controversy in the Press. So far I have been somewhat disappointed because, in spite of the fact that Your Honour considers my request for reconsideration very temperate and appropriate, it has hitherto proved sterile of results. But I have not yet lost hope, and once more appeal to Your Honour to accept my suggestion and consult some Moslem ulama and lawyers.'

It appears to me that more attention has been paid to the question whether the part which the Chairman of the Municipality, wishes to demolish is or is not a place used for prayers. What should have been considered first, however, is whether any land or building dedicated to God could be sold or transferred in any other way. I am no theologian, nor much of a lawyer, but I believe it is a well known fact that such property cannot be devoted to any other purpose. If it is so, the demolition of any part of the building is bound to hurt the feelings of us all, and it is for Your Honour to judge whether the alignment of a road is worth the price demanded from us. We could have understood the position of the authorities if some important public business was held up on account of the Moslem prejudices. But frankly, I cannot conceive how Moslem feelings can be ignored merely because the Chairman of the Municipality desires to have an alignment of the road geometrically perfect, when he could as well give a curve to the road and save the building altogether. As a matter of fact, it is my information that if the alignment had been kept straight the mosque would have been left untouched, but that in order to protect a temple a bend of about eight feet was made from a distance of about 150 feet from the mosque. I questioned the Mussulmans of Cawnpore who came too see me very searchingly to detect if there was any trace of ill-feeling towards the Hindus on the account, but I am convinced

that they bear no grudge to the Hindus on account of the decision of Your Honour to save the temple which is right in the middle of the road. As a matter of fact, they have been throughout most anxious to secure the support of the Hindu members of the Cawnpore Municipal Board, and I rejoice to see that while the Hindus supported the Mussulmans in this matter, the Mussulmans also accepted the amendment of a Hindu gentleman making the resolution less emphatic than it originally stood on the agenda of the Municipal Board. Even the voting on the question on the 20th ultimo showed that there were more Hindus for staying the proceedings to enable the Mahommedan members to make further representation to the Government than against. It seems to me that all the driving power in this matter is coming from the Chairman whose casting vote decided the matter even on the last occasion against the Mussulmans.

The statement of the Cawnpore gentlemen, if correct, throws curious light on the way in which the Collector of the District is procuring proof of the fact that the portion which the Chairman of the Municipality desires to demolish is not part of the mosque. They state that Mr. Tyler without asking anyone went into this portion of the mosque with shoes on, and on his return said that had this been a part of the mosque they would have stopped him from doing so. If this is true it serves the Mussulmans of Cawnpore right, for it seems to me that nowhere in the civilized world would a Magistrate select such a distressing method of obtaining evidence and none but the Mussulmans, who are accused by our friend the *Times* of all sorts of things would quietly tolerate such conduct. I do not know what information Your Honour has on the subject, but if Mr. Tyler has offered such evidence I hope Your Honour, has also offered him some advice which, if these are the true facts, he evidently needs. Now, as a matter of fact, a Mussulman can say his prayers with his boots on if only they are clean according to the *Shari'at*, but Indian roads, as a rule, are not so clean that the floor of a mosque would remain fit for prayers if the congregation had its boots on. This thought dictated by common sense has now assumed the form of the convention in India that nobody should enter the mosque with boots on, and for a long time this offered no inconvenience to people, because they generally wore Indian shoes which are really slippers. But in certain mosques Europeans go with their boots on, causing great offence to the Mussulmans, and I am given to understand that this practice would be put down by example, if not precept, by no less a person than His Excellency the Viceroy himself, after which let us hope not only the Jami' Masjid at Delhi but also some sacred places at Agra, where the sightseers go and where they are permitted by Mr. Mardon to go with their boots on if they are non-Moslem, will be spared what has come to be regarded as a sacrilege. But the Mussulmans of Cawnpore emphatically declare that they are prepared to prove it up to the hilt that shoes are never taken into the mosque beyond the steps and that as a matter of fact prayer is offered on the portion sought to be demolished when there is an exceptionally

large congregation. At any rate, what I have stated before in one of my telegrams the place used for ablutions is an integral part of the mosque every where, and whatever sacredness attaches to the other portions of the mosque attaches to this also.

I understand from information supplied to me that at first the idea was that the temple, which comes right in the middle of the road, should be demolished but that on the representation of the Hindus the Government rightly spared the temple. It was then considered whether as an alternative scheme a portion of the mosque should be demolished. When Your Honour visited Cawnpore in November last the Mahommedan members of the Municipal Board are alleged to have requested Your Honour to assure them that this part of the mosque would not be demolished, and I learn from the *Herald of India* that Your Honour 'assured the members that the temple and the mosque will remain untouched by the Improvement Trust'. It is alleged that inspite of this assurance the Improvement Trust passed a resolution favouring the acquisition of this part of the mosque in exchange for some land to the north, but that when this resolution came for confirmation before the Board it was postponed on the opposition of the Moslem members. Subsequently Mr. Tyler went to see the mosque and entered this part of it with boots on. Thereafter in a meeting five local ulama gave their *Fatwa* that this part of the mosque was an integral portion of the mosque and the meeting accordingly passed the resolution. Afterwards another meeting of the board took place and for want of previous notice a Moslem member's motion that no part of the mosque be destroyed was ruled out of order. In due course a deputation of some prominent Mussulmans waited upon the Collector and requested that this part of the mosque should be spared and gave instance of the Holcy Road which was originally aligned in such a manner as to require the demolition of the place reserved for ablutions in the Chhoti Idgah, but was built according to a different alignment in deference to the wishes of a Moslems deputation which waited on Mr. Holcy. I have in my possession a plan of the Holcy Road, which shows that the road has spared a portion of the mosque eleven feet in width, which would have been demolished if a geometrically perfect alignment had been insisted upon in those days. The road is from 102 to 105 feet in width generally, but where it passes by the mosque it is only 94 feet wide in one place and 97 in another. I may mention here that it appears from a plan in my possession of the mosque now in question and the proposed road that the part of the mosque said to be demolished in order to give a perfect alignment to the road is no more than 13½ feet at its greatest width.

What impresses me most is the resolution passed by the Municipal Board at a meeting held on the 1st of April. The requisition for the original resolution was signed by no less than six Hindu members in addition to the four Mahommedan members of the Board. However, two Hindu members proposed an amendment which left out the preamble of the original resolution

that no portion of the mosque should be acquired. The Chairman proposed and a European member seconded an other amendment desiring that no action be taken, but this was supported by four votes only, while the two Hindu gentlemen's amendments was supported by 15 and was carried, the proposal of the original having exceeded the amendment. It will be very presumptuous on my part even to suggest to Your Honour that under the circumstances it seems to me that local self-government would be a hollow mockery if the Chairman can still have his way. But I have no doubt that this aspect of the question has appealed to Your Honour as much as it has appealed to me.

In the reply given by Your Honour's Government to my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Shahid Husain an instance is given of a washing place attached to a mosque having been acquired at Lucknow for improvements of the town. The Cawnpore Mussulmans state that if this refers to the two mosques in Moulviganj to the west of the Aminabad Park it is their belief that the part acquired was a separate building and never used for prayers. In any case they contend that the instant of the Holcy Road, at Cawnpore itself is more to the point, and that even if in one place some Mussulmans agreed to the acquisition of a building dedicated to God for being used by Moslems making their ablutions before prayers, such consent cannot bind Mussulmans in another place. I also learn that in a meeting of the Municipal Board held on the 20th May it was only the casting vote of the Chairman which helped him to carry an amendment against staying further proceeding to enable the Mahommedan members of the Board to make the further representations to the Government. It seems to me that, if the Mahommedan members of the Board are still of the same mind as before and four Hindu members vote for staying the proceedings against three who support the Chairman, it is a matter in which Government can well regard the Chairman's views as of less moment than those of the Moslem members and a majority of the Hindu members. I hope and trust that no action of the Chairman will make this a Hindu Moslem question, but if it has become one, I fear that some would be led to suspect that the Chairman actively assisted in creating such a dissension. I know how keen Your Honour is that not a breath of suspicion should attach to the authorities with reference to the 'divide and rule' policy. I only hope the Chairman of the Municipality at Cawnpore would be equally keen to avoid such suspicions.

I have counselled the Mussulmans of Cawnpore to make yet another representation to Your Honour if they cannot accept the representation as final, and I would once more beg you to accept my suggestion and consult some Moslem Ulama and Moslem lawyers in the matter. I cannot, of course, refrain from commenting on this affair if the decision is given against what I believe to be a genuine complaint, but I would rather I do not have to comment on this matter at all, and that on a reconsideration Your Honour found that you could respect our prejudices in the matter.

REPLY FROM LIEUETNANT-GOVERNOR TO MOHAMMED ALI

I much regret the delay, due to pressure of other work, which has prevented me from sending an earlier answer to your letter of the 9th June 1913, on the subject of the Machhli Bazar Mosque in Cawnpore. I greatly appreciate your writing to me so clearly and yet in so friendly a spirit, and I will endeavour, as always, to reply in a similar tone.

2. I have re-considered with much care, and in consultation with many visitors of all classes, the decision which has been already published about the removal of the mosque *dalan*. (I call it by that name without prejudice, as the lawyers say.) I was most anxious to satisfy myself that the orders, though final so far as I was concerned, were not also unjust or inconsiderate; and after careful thought, I do not see that this can justly be said of them.

3. The *dalan* has long been shown on the A.B. road maps as marked for acquisition and removal. No protest against its removal was made to me when I was on the spot in connection with the adjacent temple; and my guarantee that the mosque should not be destroyed had no reference to a *dalan* which is obviously an architectural excrescence and which I was confidently assured by the responsible officers is not an integral part of the sacred building.

4. The protests against the removal of the *dalan* did not begin to reach me until several months after the decision to spare the Hindu temple had been promulgated. This naturally caused me to investigate whether they represented a genuine grievance, or an after-thought suggested by the concession to the Hindus and by the desire to secure some corresponding privilege for the Mahommedan community. An important fact to be ascertained for this purpose was the treatment of the *dalan* by the Mahommedans themselves. On this point I consulted Mr. Sim; and he at once told me that when the Mahommedans took him to see the *dalan* they crowded into it with their shoes on. I am not unfamiliar with the usages and sentiments on this subject, having visited many mosques myself with devout Mahommedans. I accordingly took Mr. Sim's statement (the correctness of which I unreservedly accept) as conclusive evidence that the *dalan* has not the same sanctity as the masjid proper. This evidence is a very different matter from the suggestion in your letter that Mr. Tyler entered the *dalan* wearing his boots, in order to show that it was not sacred ground. My conclusions were drawn from what the Mahommedans themselves did.

5. It was in consideration of this evidence, of the attitude of the Mahommedans when I was in Cawnpore myself, and of the belated nature of the objections, that I passed the orders I did, and described them as final. I should not have done so if I had any fear of wounding genuine susceptibilities or violating the religious sense of any body of men. There seemed to me and there still seems to me, no risk of such apprehension. Dislike to change there may be, and resentment of interference with the old and familiar. But the cry

of outraged religious sentiment I regarded as exaggerated and not wholly sincere. I believed that, by replacing the *dalan* in another and equally suitable site and by giving reasonable help to the mosque or its appanages, we should make compensation for any temporary inconvenience to the worshippers, or for any change in their accustomed routine. We are ready to make ample compensation in this way, the alternative, as you point out, would have been to deflect the road, or to allow the *dalan* to project into it. This would in itself have been a small matter. But to what extent are public improvements to be obstructed by minor concessions to individuals or sections of the community?

6. Believe me I should have been very glad to avoid this bother; but we must all agree, if we wish for the public good, to discriminate between the big things and the small. If every inconsiderable trouble is to be magnified into a racial grievance and accepted as such, then goodbye to the usefulness of Government and to the advance of the public welfare. When I go to Cawnpore next month, I will see the Mahommedans and do what I can to remove any feeling of soreness, which I should sincerely regret. But I am afraid that I cannot alter the decision to move the *dalan* out of the alignment of the A.B. road. I am none the less grateful to you for putting the matter before me so fairly and frankly as you have done.

Source: The Comrade, 5 July 1913.

3

LETTER FROM MOHAMMED ALI TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE EMPIRE'

As an admirer of the independent and liberal-minded *Empire* I regret to note that in your comments on the 'Cawnpore Riots' you have fallen into more than one error. At times such as this it is easy enough to fall into an error of judgment when on the one side we see the custodians of law and order and on the other an excited mob even if it is at first guilty of nothing more than a 'public nuisance' in piling lose bricks without mortar upon one another on a site upon which but a month ago stood part of a mosque but which is now part and parcel of a new 'Sanitary Road'. But for a newspaper charged with the duty of stating the facts correctly to fall into errors of fact is to be guilty of still further clouding a situation which is already a good deal befogged.

You are right in saying, 'the Provincial Government's manifesto has only added fuel to the flames'. The flames were already there in

Cawnpore and had been growing in intensity for some months; but the almost inevitable conflagration was prevented by the so-called 'outside agitators' of whom presumably I am one, who had counselled moderation, the use of none but constitutional means and preferably the suppression of newspaper agitation. Were it not for this, the flame would have lit up the big fire a month ago when a portion of the mosque was demolished. The Provincial Government's manifesto has indeed 'added fuel to the flames' in as much as it accused the Mussulmans of Cawnpore of religious apathy by stating that there was no excitement in Cawnpore itself. It is reckless statement such as this that led to bloodshed, because the more ardent spirits consider that excitement can be proved only by breaking the law. To say that the riots are due to the taunts of outside agitators or the attacks of newspapers is to explain away one falsehood by means of another. You are, therefore, fully justified in seeking an explanation of the mob's action at Cawnpore on Sunday in the press communique, issued by the U. P. Government about a week previously.

But to say that the Chairman of Municipality had no interest in retailing the story of Cawnpore Mussulmans crowding into the mosque with their shoes on in company with him is to ignore the obvious; and to state that 'although the Cawnpore Mussulmans have continued the agitation, they have not denied this point', is to say that which is entirely at variance with the facts. Was it not the Chairman who had set his heart on demolishing a portion of this mosque and had opposed the resolution for saving it which was adopted by the Municipal Board with the help of all the Indian votes both Hindu and Mahommedan ? Was it not the Chairman who requested Government that this recommendation of Board should not be accepted ? Was it not the Chairman whose casting vote decided that after the Government's rejection of the Board's recommendation at his own suggestion of the Memorial sent through the Hon. Shaikh Shahid Husain, no further representation be made to Government to save the mosque ? Was it not the Chairman who, after Sir James Meston's assurance, as published in the *Cawnpore Herald* and never contradicted ere this, that neither the temple nor the mosque would be touched, interpreted the touching of the mosque as the demolition of the western portion of mosque only ? Was it not the Chairman who hurried things so manifestly as to give to the Trustees only twentyfour hours' notice about the acceptance of the compensation when I believe at least a fortnight's notice is usual ? And was it not the Chairman who had the Eastern *dalan* demolished on the 1st July even before Sir James Meston had replied to my letter of the 9th June and to the Memorial forwarded to him by the Hon. the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad ? If human beings, including bureaucrats, are occasionally obstinate and headstrong, why should we believe Mr. Sim, the Chairman, to have been nothing but reasonable and accommodating ?

Sir James Meston unreservedly accepts the truth of his statement; but why the *Empire* or the *world* ? So much for possibilities and probabilities. Now a word about certainties. You say that 'the Cawnpore Mussulmans.......have

not denied the point,' namely, 'the entrance of the Moslems who accompanied the Chairman of the Municipality wearing their shoes'. I say they have denied the point and more than once. I am grateful to Sir James Meston—and so are all of us—for permitting me to publish the correspondence that I carried on for a month and a half with His Honour instead of agitating in the Press. Besides showing that the eastern *dalan* where hands and faces and feets etc., were washed preparatory to prayers, or where overflow congregations offered prayers had been misrepresented to Sir James to be a mere 'bathing enclosure', that correspondence shows that the sole evidence of the want of sanctity of the eastern *dalan* is the *ipse dixit* of Mr. Sim. Now for months past the Mussulmans of Cawnpore had been complaining of Mr. Tyler's having walked into the mosque with his boots on without asking anyone, and then turning round to the horrified and we must add, terrified, even if it be the taunt of an outside agitator—spectators with the remark that as they did not prevent his entering it with boots on, the place could not have been a sacred portion of the mosque; Mr. Tyler is the District Magistrate of Cawnpore and the officer who ordered the police to fire on the mob last Sunday and for purposes of the Census at least is a totally different individual from Mr. Sim, the Chairman. Nobody in Cawnpore knew that Mr. Sim had ever walked into the mosque with his boots on, and when through the *Comrade* of the 5th July the Cawnpore Mussulmans learnt for the first time of his statement, they asked all present in a crowded meeting to state if they had entered the mosque with shoes on in his company or seen him do it. Everyone denied it, and this denial has been published by the Trustees of the Mosque. They wanted to serve a notice on him to state who among the Mussulmans had committed this sacrilege and when he had done it himself or else withdraw. But in view of Sir James Meston's desire to prevent further excitement and his promise of receiving a deputation led by the Hon. the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad, the Cawnpore Mussulmans were advised not to serve a lawyer's notice on the Charirman but merely ask him in a private letter. I am informed—and I believe this has been published in the newspapers—that Mr. Sim has very discreetly replied that he cannot make any statement on the subject at present. If the Conference next Saturday is not successful, I have no doubt that Mr. Sim would be served with a lawyer's notice to withdraw or take the consequences. I trust this explanation will convince you that the Mussulmans of Cawnpore denied the story of Mr. Sim which is to sole evidence in possession of Government that the demolished portion was not sacred.

Although not relevant in this connection I must say you have fallen into another error of fact about the Moslem University Fund. I was the first I believe to propose a loan—not a gift as you say—of the University Fund to Turkey for war purposes and my warmest, but somewhat belated supporter was no other than His Highness the Aga Khan to whom you attribute a 'steadying influence'. As a matter of fact I have in my possession two letters in which I

am authorised to require the authorities in charge of the University Fund to land His Highness's own munificent contribution to the University Fund to the Ottoman Government.

Let me assure you, Sir, that matters of this character have a seriousness of their own which unfortunately Englishmen even in India have not fully realised, and it is the duty of all independent and liberal-minded journalists such as you to publish no statement unless they are sure of their facts. The Cawnpore Mosque question will either be finally settled, as I hope and trust, by the sagacious statesmanship of Sir James Meston, undoubtedly the ablest Civilian in India, or it would remain an open sore for year and years. I would therefore suggest a careful perusal of all the literature published on the subject and would commend the files of the *Comrade* to you. One in your position can save Government from an error which may have even greater consequences than the Partition of Bengal conceived in chagrin, carried out in revenge, and continued for some time at least in obstinacy.

Source : The Comrade, 9 August 1913.

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HON. NAWAB NAWAB ALI CHAUDHRI'S SPEECH TO A MEETING OF MAHOMMEDANS TO PROTEST AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT ACTION ON KANPUR MOSQUE AT THE TOWN HALL CALCUTTA

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

I do not use the language of convention when I say that I consider it a very great honour to be asked to preside over your deliberations this afternoon. The gathering which I see before me in this historic hall represents all classes of the Mussulman community in the metropolis and the suburbs and I also see before me leading Mahommedans from all important districts in the Presidency. An assemblage of such great importance and significance full of Ulema, leading merchants, zamindars, leading men of the various professions, representing all shades of opinion in our community is proof positive, if proof indeed were needed, that the deliberations in which we are going to take part, concern matters of utmost importance to the community. I am not one of those who would rush into the arena of political agitation for the sake of notoriety, or who would consent to publicly criticise the action of the authorities unless I am sincerely and deeply convinced that such criticism is imperatively necessary in the interest of the administration itself. From all

that I have heard, and from all that I have read about the unfortunate happenings at Cawnpore and about the mosques at Delhi and Agra the conviction has irresistibly forced itself on my mind that the feelings of the Mahommedan community have been very deeply stirred, that the minds of all classes in our community are in a state of ferment, and that there is ample reason for this state of feelings. I have therefore considered it my duty not only to be present at this meeting but to thankfully accept the great honour you have done me by selecting me as your President in order that I may discharge my duty to the community to which I have the honour to belong and also to the Government to which we are bound by all the ties of loyalty and devotion, by interpreting to the authorities the true feelings of the Mahommedan community in these matters. If at a critical moment such as this when even the best intentioned error of judgement on the part of the Government may provide a turning point in the ideas and feelings of the Mussulmans, would it be right for any of us who claims to be devoted to Government to keep aloof from the counsel of his community and give Government the wholly wrong and misleading impression that the feelings to which I have referred are confined to a few zealous agitators and have not permeated every stratum of Moslem society in India.

No, gentlemen, these are not the views and opinions of a few misguided enthusiasts or of mischief-mongers bent on misguiding their co-religionists. These are the views and opinions of all classes of Mussulmans and I do not interpret my duty to Government as silence or serene assurance that may lead Government to the edge of the precipice. I hold that it is the duty of every loyalist to warn the Government in time and save it from unrealized and incalculable dangers. What would the general of an army think of his scouts who gave in false assurances about the dangers of an advance movement merely to confirm his own fancies ?

In the next place let me assure Government that an agitation of such magnitude and importance is at all a local affair or merely got-up for the occasion. Its roots lie buried deep down in the most cherished religious conviction of a community the binding force of which is neither race nor colour but religion. It is this which makes the affairs of a mosque as much an affair of Calcutta as of Cawnpore as much an affair of Dacca as of Delhi. That is the justification of our assembling here to-day and let me assure Government that no wirepulling from beyond Bengal was necessary in a matter in which our religious duty has been tugging at our heart strings ever since the 1st of July.

Coming now to the matter in hand there is no doubt that the portion of the Cawnpore mosque which has been demolished is an integral part of the mosque itself. The *Fatwas* of the Ulema leave no room for doubt that this portion is as sacred as any other part of the mosque. Even if it be accepted for argument's sake that the eastern *dalan* of the mosque was a place only utilised for purposes of ablutions and not also for prayers can any one who

knows anything about our mosque believe that shoes were taken to place where ablutions were made. From everything which the authorities have published it appears that the only evidence against the contention of the Mussulmans of Cawnpore which the authorities have is that the Chairman of the Municipality states that he saw some shoes in the eastern *dalan* and when he went in with his shoes on, the Mussulmans of Cawnpore followed his example. This single statement, contrary to the most complete and categorical denials of the Mussulmans of Cawnpore to which the Chairman has nothing to say has been unreservedly accepted by the Lieutenant-Governor and without offering the least chance for a cross-examination of rebutting evidence. Sir James Meston had not only given judgment against Mussulmans but had also has it executived even before it was delivered.

This Cawnpore sacrilege was preceded by an act of similar lamentable affair at Agra and has created a universal apprehension that the authorities are growing indifferent to the religious susceptibilities of the Mahommedans community. Apprehensions like this create such grave dangers for Government that it is our bounden duty to bring them to its notice. After this we expect that the Government would also do its duty and remove them by action which will be both appropriate and effective.

It is well known that all important cities of India are full of mosques, tombs and shrines of saints held in the highest veneration by all classes of the community. Schemes of City Improvement are being pushed on with utmost vigour and enthusiasm all over India and it is not impossible that under excess of zeal through with the best of intention officials may overlook the veneration due to these sacred places. We should bring home to the authorities the duties they owe to an important section of His Majesty's subject in India, a section of His Majesty's subjects whose loyalty to the King has only been exceeded by their submission to the commandments of their God. Therefore, while expressing our resentment at what has taken place let us request Government to take all reparation that is now within its power, and make such action as may effectively prevent sacrileges in the future. I am informed that His Honour Sir James Meston is about to receive a deputation of some eminent Mussulmans on the subject. Let us hope, Sir James would himself see the error of the policy hitherto followed and order the restoration of the demolished portion of the mosque. In any case His Excellency the Viceroy is sure to do justice and we look to him to heal our wounded feelings.

Coming to the question of Haj, in the first place, all, monopolies are objectionable and particularly a monopoly in a matter like this which affect a religious observance of supreme moment to our community. In the second place number of pilgrims have no intention of returning at all or at any rate until after a fairly long sojourn in Arabia. To give to a European firm a monopoly of the Haj Traffic and to insist on the purchase of the return tickets would cause a great deal of hardship and annoyance and is likely to be misunderstood by the people as an official interference in the performance of a

sacred religious duty. It is the latter aspect of this question which fills me with grave apprehensions although I cannot regard with complacency any action tending to increase the cost of pilgrimage and thus place it out of the reach of the poor who, I must confess, are keener in the performance of such religious duties than the well-to-do classes.

I cannot conclude my remarks, gentlemen, without some reference to stirring events abroad and also when no one expected it. Turkey had to go to war with four Balkan States whom no one acquainted with their bitter hatred of each other could have expected to become allies of each other.

At the first outbreak of hostilities in the Balkans the British Government proclaimed its policy of strict neutrality and of preserving the *status quo* when, however, the Turks began to lose the policy of preserving the *status quo* was changed and the victors were assured that they would not be deprived of the fruits of their victory. To-day the Turks have regained some of the lost territory specially Adrianople, but the British Premier is threatening to force the Turks to go back to the Enos-Midiam line which however is to be interpreted by the Powers. (Shame) Gentlemen, this is a matter in which we owe a double-duty. We owe a duty to the Khelafatul-Muslimeen to do all in our power to assist him and we owe a duty to our Government to assist in preventing all actions likely to diminish the capital of goodwill and loyalty which, in the words of our former Secretary of State deservedly held in high reverence for his love of honesty and his wise statesmanship, now happily exists among Indian Mussulmans. I have no hesitation in saying that British insistence on Turkey's abiding by the terms of the Treaty of London which can be more sacred than the Treaties of Paris and Berlin, would be regarded in India as an unfriendly transaction and would cause no less resentment than the British partition and occupation of Persia. The Powers could not restrain Servia and Greece from not only driving back Bulgaria from her recently acquired territories but also from entombing her in her Capital. The Powers could not restrain Rumania which had not even the shadow of a reason for declaring war on Bulgaria. Is Turkey, then, to be the only belligerent that must be restrained and is her territory to be the only portion of God's each of which must remain Bulgarian in spite of all Bulgarian reverses ? Is this the preservation of the *status quo* or is it the observance of neutrality ? What concerns us most, is Great Britain to be the only Power whose Prime Minister should openly threaten Turkey ? The policy of his Cabinet has been so contradictory and so parochial that even Anglo-Indian journals have repudiated it. Unless this policy is completely upset I have grave apprehensions that it would come to be regarded by Mussulmans in India as openly hostile to the spiritual head of the Mussulmans of the world. The Emperor is the temporal sovereign of hundred million Mussulmans. The belief that the Governments of the two are opposed to each other and that Great Britain is so unreasonably prejudiced against Turkey that she is willing to be unjust to her and her Prime Minister is prepared to swallow his own words repeatedly

will do incalculable mischief. As members of the British Empire we owe it a duty and may we never falter in carrying it out in the hour of its need. But as such we have some right also and we trust they will be fully respected. It is primarily on such a basis that the Empire can grow and prosper and we pray and work for its growth and its prosperity. (Loud and prolonged Cheers).

The Hon. Mr. Fazlul Huq moved the following resolutions :

That this meeting of the Mussulmans of Calcutta and its suburbs most emphatically asserts that according to the principles of the Mahommedan religion and law, the portion of the Machhli Bazar mosque at Cawnpore which has been forcibly demolished by the U.P. authorities, is an integral part and as sacred as any other part of the said mosque, and it strongly protests against the various misrepresentations contained in the recent official communique in connection therewith.

He said that in those matters no matter what the consequences might be, no matter which the difficulties might be in their way they were determined to make it plain to Government that in the matter of their religious susceptibilities they would not allow even their highest officials to interfere.

Mr. Khursed Husain seconded and Maulvi Abdul Raoof and Maulvi Abdul Ahed supported the resolution which was carried.

Mr. Abul Kasem moved :

That this meeting expresses its deep sense of resentment and indignation at the sacriligious conduct of the U.P. authorities and thereby seriously interfering with the religious liberty of His Majesty's subject assured under the Royal Proclamation of 1858, the Charter of the Indian people.

He said that the official communique stated that the portion on the mosque demolished was not the integral part, who was to decide that ? The Mahommedans or the members of the Indian Civil Service ? The Mahommedans and the *Mutawallis* were proper persons to decide that question. They had met there that day under the shadow of a calamity unprecedented in the history of the country.

Nawab Nasir Hussain Khayal seconded the resolution which was carried.

The Hon. Maulvi Mahomed Tahir moved :

That this meeting respectfully requests His Excellency the Viceroy to direct the restoration of the demolished portion of mosque and urges upon the Government to take such action as may be necessary to insure in future due respect on the part of the authorities for the religious sentiments of the community.

Mr. S.M. Shariff seconded, and Mirza Ahmed Ali and Maulvi Kazim Hossain supported the resolution which was carried.

Aga Moinul Islam Jalaluddin moved :

That this meeting of the Mussulmans of Calcutta and its suburbs requests

the Chief Commissioner of Delhi to order the early restoration of the mosque of the late Maulana Abdul Huq Mohaddis Dehlavi which was demolished by the mistake of the local officials, and further to show respect to the religious feelings of the Mahommedans by issuing necessary instructions to the local officers to abstain in future from the acquisition or demolition of any old mosque, tomb, graveyard, or their places intended or used as places for the observances of religious rites under the New Improvement scheme.

• Mr. Ehsan Karim seconded and Maulvi Rukn-ud-din supported the resolution which was carried.

Maulvi Najmuddin Ahmed moved :

That the recent recommendation by the Bombay Government about Haj traffic for the grant of monoply of Messrs. Turner Morrison and Company or any other shipping company and for the introduction of the system of compulsory return ticket is detrimental to the interest of the Hajees. This meeting therefore opposes the introduction of any such regulations and prays that the Government of India refuse their sanction to the proposal.

He said, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I rise to propose the resolution V which stands in my name relating to the Haj question which has been agitating the minds of the Indian Mussulmans ever since it was announced that the Bombay Government had submitted proposals to the Supreme Government for placing certain restriction for the Haj traffic. The concern grew into an alarm when a local newspaper published a report that the proposals have been accepted by the Government of India. This report fortunately turned out to be premature and inaccurate and there has been ample evidence since to show that the Government of India was anxious to consult Mussulman opinion on the matter before according its sanction. For this, gentlemen, we must be grateful to Lord Hardinge and his colleagues for it would have been a grievous wrong to the Mahommedan community to have ignored their opinion in a matter affecting the performance of their great religious duty. The Bombay Government which apparently did not consult local Mahommedan opinion may in this respect profitably take a lesson from the reasonable procedure adopted by the Government of India for future guidance, especially in question touching the religious practices of the Indian people.

As you are aware, Gentlemen, the two proposals of the Bombay Government to which we take exception are :

(1) The granting of a monopoly of the pilgrim traffic to Messrs. Turner Morrison and Co., and (2) the introduction of a system of compulsory return tickets for all pilgrims going from India. We object to both because in our opinion they are calculated to increase the cost of journey to the Holy places and to impose unnecessary restriction upon many pilgrims.

The grant of monopoly of the traffic to any particular shipping company will necessarily abolish competition which is the principal factor in maintaining

minimum fares with maximum comforts. That a rise in the fares will be inevitable and operate hardly upon the poorer pilgrims is not denied by the Government and in fact a suggestion has been made to subsidize the Company from the public revenue for keeping down the fares. Prevention is better than cure and we naturally ask why should the Government first create a state of things and then try to remedy the same by expenditure from Public Revenue ? It is said that this regulation has been proposed in the interest of sanitation, a legitimate and laudable object which every civilized Government must adopt, but can any one seriously argue that the interest of sanitation cannot be served without the grant of monopoly of traffic and without abolishing a system of healthy competition among the ship-owners ?

Gentlemen, if the grant of monopoly will indirectly interfere with the performance of the pilgrimage by the poor Mahommedans a system of compulsory return tickets will directly interfere with their liberty in the matter. It will make it impossible for a large number of pilgrims who by their own manual or skilled labour expect to earn their passage money at Hedjaz. It will interfere with the plans of those who prefer to do a little business on their own account at Hedjaz with any extra money that they can afford to take with them instead of keeping their money in profitable deposit until their return. There can be no reason for compelling such of the pilgrims to purchase return tickets as go with the intention of passing the remainder of their lives at the Holy place or those who desire to pass a longer period in visiting many sacred places and cannot return to Jedda within the period allowed in the return ticket.

We are made to understand that the proposal has been necessitated owing to the difficulty of repatriating the stranded Indian Pilgrims who go to Hedjaz without providing themselves with a sufficient money to insure their return journey. For the first time last year since the establishment of British Government in India 500 stranded pilgrims were brought back at the expense of the Government. What their numbers in the previous year had been and what arrangements were made for their return we do not know, but since no arrangment was made by Government they were apparently brought back by private charity. My information is that this large number of destitute pilgrims was due to a monopoly secured by the Persian Shipping Co., who succeeded in chartering the ships of all other Companies which anchored at Jedda. Even if we take 500 as number of pilgrims stranded every year it will not necessarily follow that all of them were persons who had gone there without providing themselves with the means of returning to India. It is a well known fact that many of the pilgrims although provided with sufficient money are occasionally robbed or deprived through circumstances not within their control. Even compulsory return tickets will get lost by robbery or misfortune and will not prevent their holders from getting stranded. Such persons must be left to be brought back by private charity or at the expense of the Public Revenue. The proposal, therefore, while unnecessarily interfering with the religious

freedom of certain classes of pilgrims will scarcely prevent the stranding of some of the pilgrims thus failing in its professed object.

Gentlemen, it is hardly necessary to detain you by going through all the pros and cons relating to these proposals. They have by this time been widely discussed and representations, some of them containing practical suggestions for meeting the situation, have already been submitted to the Government. Our duty at this meeting is only to echo the true feelings and views of the Mussulmans in this matter.

Haji Ahmed Abdul Latif seconded and Maulvi Majibur Rahman supported the resolution which was carried.

Mr. A Rasul moved the following resolution :

That this meeting heartily congratulates H.I.M. the Sultan of Turkey and the Turkish nation on the brilliant march of Enver Bey and the recapture of Adrianople, and in veiw of the rumours of coercion of Turkey and the threat of Mr. Asquith this meeting trusts that Great Britain would respect not only her declaration of neutrality the Prime Minister's statement guaranteeing the fruits of victory to the victor but also the feelings and sentiments of His Majesty's Indian Moslem subjects by refraining from all transactions of any unfriendly character likely to diminish silently the capital of goodwill and loyalty which now happily exists among Indian Mahommedans.

Mr. Rasul said : Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, it is very strange that I should have been entrusted with this resolution. It is well known I am not a *persona grata* with the authorities. Some members of the Government think I am not loyal, but I can assure them that I am as loyal to His Majesty the King Emperor as any of them. It breaks one's heart to think of or talk about Turkey and yet we must do it. To-day we are congratulating His Imperial Majesty the Sultan who is our 'Amir-ul-Momenin' and his army under Enver Bey on their recapturing Adrianople and other recent victories, but we would have congratulated them on many more victories in their war with the Allies, had there not been treachery and betrayal among some of the most trusted officers and commanders of their own. I am in possession of facts regarding this unfortunate affairs which I am not in a position now to disclose, but before long they will be placed before the public by men who are more competent to deal with them. Now about Mr. Asquith's threat. It is very painful to us Mussulmans to find that the Prime Minister of the greatest Mussulman Powers in the world should have threatened Turkey in the way he did. Evidently he is not aware how deeply he has hurt the feelings of the Mussulman subjects of His Majesty. But this was not the first occasion on which he offended his Mussulman fellow-subjects. It was his Government which assured the whole world at the commencement of the war that whatever might be the result, the *status quo* would be maintained and yet after the victories of the allies, the Prime Minister and his Foreign Secretary declared that it would be impossible to maintain the *status quo* now and to deprive the

victors of the fruits of their victories. At the Guildhall banquet last November, Mr. Asquith made a speech in the presence of the Turkish and Persian Ambassadors the representatives of two Mussulman Powers, gloating over the fall of Salonica with a special emphasis on the fact that Salonica was the gate through which Christianity entered Europe. No doubt it was a matter of great joy to the European Christians, but have we Mussulmans no feelings, should he not as the Prime Minister of the greatest Mussulman Power, have respected the feelings and sentiments of his Mussulman fellow-subjects, specially of the two Mussulman representatives, present at the banquet. Our grievance is why should the Prime Minister and his Government go out of their way to wound our feelings and sentiments. In the Balkan War, it was his Government which declared its neutrality before any other Power did. It was his Government which first recognised the Italian sovereignty over Tripoli, and it was he who first threatened Turkey with penalties for recapturing Adrianople and other places. The last part of the resolution which I have placed before you has been taken from the speech recently made by Lord Morley in the House of Lords on the Persian question. Now if the feelings and sentiments of the Mussulmans are to be respected we appeal to the British sense of justice, we appeal to Britain, we appeal to the Prime Minister himself to persuade the other Powers not to force Turkey to evacuate Adrianople and the other places they have recently recaptured. It is strange indeed that Roumania has taken possession of large territories over which Bulgaria has exercised right of sovereignty for the last forty or fifty years and there has been protest from many European Power, but Turkey is to be compelled to abandon territories which she has recaptured and over which she exercised sovereignty only three or four months ago. We therefore repeat our appeal and humbly pray that England should see that Turkey is not forced to evacuate Adrianople and the other places which are again in her possession.

Mr. Mohamed Ali seconded the above resolution.

The following resolution was put from the chair and carried :

'That is a view of recent events, this meeting is strongly of opinion that a deputation of the representatives of the Mahommedans of all parts of India do wait on His Excellency the Viceroy at an early date to give expression to the feelings and views of the community on the present situation and that the deputation does consist of the Hon. Mr. A. G. H. C. Ariff, the Hon. Mr. Fazlul Haq, Mr. Fakhruddin Ahmed and the mover with power to add to their number.'

Source : **The Comrade, 9 August 1913.**

5

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE PROVINCIAL MOSLEM LEAGUE OF THE M. W. F. PROVINCE, PESHAWER

(1) This meeting expresses deep sorrow at the Cawnpore bloodshed and holds the United Provinces Government Communique responsible for it, and deems Mr. Tyler's orders unwarranted and rash.

(2) This meeting respectfully recommends His Excellency the Viceroy to an appointment of Commission with half non-European members to publicly investigate this regrettable incident and excesses of Mr. Tyler. It also recommends that the demolished mosque be rebuilt and officers concerned suspended till the Commission's report.

(3) Cawnpore relief fund be opened forthwith.

(4) This meeting declares that the *Comrade* and *Zamindar* are loyally serving the Government in exposing the excess of local officers and that unsympathetic and haughty tone of certain Anglo-Indian papers is responsible for Moslem dissatisfaction.

(5) Copies of first and second resolutions be sent to the Viceroy and proceedings to the Press.

The following resolution was passed by the Bareilly Moslems :

'The Mahommedans of Bareilly assembled in a mass meeting in the Naumabla Juma Mosque, whose hearts are deeply moved by the Cawnpore tragedy, urge respectfully but strongly that a mixed commission of Hindus, Mahommedans and Europeans be appointed to investigate the whole affair thoroughly and impartially and that the Magistrate, the police and other officials concerned be posted elsewhere away from Cawnpore so that real justice be done. They also pray that the mosque be restored.'

Source : The Comrade, 16 August 1913.

6

LETTER FROM SIR MICHAEL O'DWYER TO HARDINGE

11 August 1913

There is, however, one really dangerous element, *viz.*, the temper of the Mahommedans. They have been sorely tried, not only by their quarrels with other communities in the Punjab, but also by the trouble

in Turkey and by the recent incidents in Cawnpore, and they have no real leader to guide them.

The older men take a reasonable view of the latter (Cawnpore), and admit that the Cawnpore mob put themselves in the wrong, but they also admit that the victims will be regarded as martyrs by the great mass of their co-religionists, and that though unjustly, the odium will fall on Government. But curiously enough the Cawnpore incident does not bulk nearly so big in their mind as the question of Adrianople. It's astonishing how keenly and critically they follow every move in the game in the Balkans and every reference to the subject of British statesmen. They will regard the action of our Government in the matter as a test of our attitude towards Turkey and Islam in General.

Source : **Hardinge Papers, 1913.**

7

DEMI-OFFICIAL FROM THE HON'BLE MR. MUHAMMAD SHAFI TO SIR JAMES DUBOULAY, K.C.I.E., 'EARLSFIELD' SIMLA, E., 18 August 1913

The Cawnpore trial is giving rise to an amount of excitement all over the country, the continuance of which is, from every point of view, in the highest degree undesirable. Meetings are being held from Peshawar, on the one hand, to Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, on the other. Relief Funds for the widows and orphans of those under arrest are being started; and appeals on behalf of these Funds are being issued in the Press and by means of leaflets describing the pitiable condition of the afflicted in most pathetic terms. Notwithstanding the presence in the Court of a large number of Barristers and Vakils, I have received telegrams and letters from all over India and already meetings have begun to pass resolutions asking me to go down to Cawnpore to defend the accused in the trial which is going on there.

I earnestly appeal to His Excellency to exercise the high prerogative vested in him and to be graciously pleased to direct the withdrawal of this prosecution—as was done in one of the conspiracy trials in Calcutta some time ago. This act of clemency will not only arrest the spread of excitement but will bring about a reaction which will enable those who sincerely deprecate this deplorable situation to try to restore calm, and for His Excellency himself a wave of gratitude and enthusiasm will spread all over Muslim India which will

be productive of the best possible results. I respectfully and earnestly beg of His Excellency to give this humble suggestion a favourable consideration and, should His Excellency be pleased to agree, to take the necessary steps as soon as possible. I beg to assure His Excellency that the suggestion is made in the best interests of both the Government and the Mahommedan Community.

Source: Government of India—Home Department—Political A Proceedings, October 1913, Nos. 100–18.

8

DEPUTATION TO THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

A Deputation headed by the Hon'ble Raja of Mahmudabad waited upon his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor at Government House, Lucknow, at 11 A.M. on the 16th instant and presented the following address:

May it please Your Honour,

'We, the undersigned, beg leave to approach Your Honour on behalf of the Muslim community of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh in connexion with the Machhli Bazar Mosque at Cawnpore.

'Before entering into merits of the question which we propose to discuss very briefly, we beg to state that we approach Your Honour in this behalf with a full sense of our responsibility to our own community as well as to the Government. This responsibility we have undertaken in view of the great importance of the question which we are to lay before Your Honour for your consideration. We feel that we shall be wanting in our duty to our community and loyalty to our Government if we fail at this juncture, which we regard as critical, to give expression to the feelings of our community. Considerations of such weighty character led us to pray Your Honour to receive a Deputation, and we are highly grateful for the permission so kindly given, which has enabled us to approach Your Honour to-day.

'We would first assure Your Honour that our community is not moved by any feeling of jealousy towards the good fortune that has attended the Hindu temple close to the mosque in question. Our community has deeply resented the suggestion that the outburst of feeling was due to the saving of the said Temple. We think that it should have, and rightly, been spared.

[1] Members of the Deputation: Mohamed Ali Mohamad, Shaikh Shahid Hosain, Md. Ehtisham Ali, Syed Nabiullah, M. Habib-ur-Rahman Khan, A. Raoof, S. Raza Ali, Mohamad Naseem, Md. Abdul Bari, Tasadduq Rasul Khan, M. Muzummillullah Khan, Mahomed Ishaq Khan, Ghulam-us-Saqlain, Syed Abu Zafar.

'We would now beg to say a few words with reference to the charge of laches and delay which has been brought against the Mussulmans of Cawnpore directly interested in the mosque. Without entering into the question as to whether it is accurate to say that the portion of the mosque demolished on the 1st of July 1913, was actually and legally acquired in 1909, we would venture to submit that reasons are not wanting to show that the Mussulman public of Cawnpore had been ignorant of the fact of acquisition. No demarcation of the land to be acquired had been made on the spobt nor any plan of the land published otherwise than by filling an English copy of it for public inspection in the Collector's Office. If the plan so filed be examined by itself, it will not show that any portion of the mosque as intended to be acquired. Moreover, no notice required by section 8 of the Land Acquisition Act was ever served on the Trustees of the mosque as it was on the occupiers of all neighbouring places. At any rate, there can be no doubt that any apprehensions on this score were removed when in November 1912 the Mussulman public of Cawnpore took what Your Honour was pleased to say to some of the members of our community of that place as an assurance that the mosque as a whole be saved from demolition. It would further appear that the acquisition was not understood even by some of the members of the Municipal Board of Cawnpore to have been finally decided upon until the meeting of the Board held on the 8th of March 1913, as is indicated by the following resolution which was moved at the meeting of the Board held on the 1st of April 1913.

'From the proceedings of the Improvement Trust Committee that came before the Board at its meeting held on the 4th of March 1913, and were confirmed by the Board at the meeting on the 8th of March 1913, to which a protest by a Member of the Board was ruled out of order, the Board has come to know that a portion of the building of the Mosque in Machhli Bazar is being acquired for the purpose of the A.B. Road. Resolved that contemplated acquisition being objectionable on religious grounds and being contrary to the spirit of the declaration by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor on the 13th November 1912, the Board is of opinion that the said portion of the mosque should not be acquired and that any previous resolution of the Board directly or impliedly approving of such acquisition be cancelled.'

After discussion this resolution was amended and passed in the following terms :

'That a recommendation may be sent to the Government requesting that no portion of the mosque on the A.B. Road be acquired in deference to feelings of the Mahommedan community.

'The Chairman of the Board forwarded the said Resolution to the Government through the Collector with a note of his own disapproving of the resolution. The Government thereupon, declined to accept the recommendations of the Board.

'Another attempt was made in the Board to save the mosque *dalan* by

moving a resolution in a meeting held on the 20th May 1913, to the effect that 'The Board recommends that the Government be pleased to reconsider its decision'. To this the Chairman moved an amendment to the effect that 'No further representation be made by the Board and the Government order be accepted as final', which was carried and the original motion lost only by the casting vote of the chairman, and thus so far as the Board was concerned the matter concluded on that day.

'In the meanwhile, in the month of March 1913, a representative deputation of the Mahommedans of Cawnpore had waited on the Collector of the district in connexion with the mosque but to no effect. This step was followed by a memorial submitted by them to Your Honour through the Hon'ble Shaikh Shahid Husain, which was rejected on the 6th of May 1913. Lastly another memorial on behalf of the Mussulmans of Cawnpore was submitted to Your Honour through the Hon'ble Raja of Mahmudabad, the reply to which was sent to him after the demolition of the mosque-*dalan*. Besides submitting memorials, further efforts were made to impress Your Honour with the justice of their claim supported as it was by the *Fatwas* of our Ulema.

'Your Honour, the question of the comparative sanctity of the portion demolished is, we beg to submit, purely one of Mahommedan Ecclesiastical Law. Backed by our inherited convictions, as old as our Faith itself and by the Fatwas of our Ulema delivered recently, we beg to affirm with all the power of earnestness that we can command, that the portion demolished was sacred and was an integral part of the mosque.

'We have no doubt that Your Honour will pardon us if we speak on this part of the question somewhat frankly and feelingly. It has pained us greatly to find arguments publicly addressed in derogation to our religious views on this subject. We, under the sense of expediency, do not desire to enter into the task of refuting those arguments in this address. Your Honour, if it is permissible for us to compare the intensity of our feelings on one part of the question with another we would have no hesitation in saying that this part has wounded our feelings the most.

'We beg to assure Your Honour that the feelings of our community on this question as a whole are neither individual, local nor manufactured. The demolition of the *dalan* on the 1st of July 1913, previous to which we were quietly making efforts with the authorities for saving it, has caused a tremendous outburst of feeling amongst the entire Muslim population of India. These feelings are genuine, real and founded upon the bed-rock of Religious Faith. We need hardly say that the question is one of neither logic nor reasoning, and we fervently hope that it will appeal to Your Honour, if you will be pleased to consider in the same spirit in which it is placed before you.

'Our proposal to approach Your Honour had originated some time before the lamentable events of the 3rd of August 1913. We all bewail those

unfortunate events, but we refrain from dwelling on those events any more than to deplore them since they are about to be the subject of a judicial enquiry. We, however, fully trust that those events will not affect Your Honour's decision in the matter.

'We pray Your Honour, and pray you most respectfully and earnestly that the demolished portion of the mosque may be restored for which we and our entire community, as in duty bound, shall ever pray. We need hardly assure Your Honour that the order prayed for, if passed, will have the effect of allaying the growing excitement and healing the wounded feelings of the entire Muslim community.'

THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S REPLY

Gentlemen, I thank you warmly for the manner in which you have placed before me your views on certain question connected with the Machhli Bazar Mosque, Cawnpore. The course which you have adopted is in marked contrast to the intemperate language and distortion of facts with which the matter has been treated in some sections of the Press. It has been a source of much unhappiness to me that any considerable body of Mahommedans should think so ill of Government and its officers as to believe we were actuated by the motives they ascribed, and that we proceeded in ignorance of your sentiments and practices. That they assume. I am indebted to you therefore for the opportunity that you have given me to-day of putting our proceedings and our motives in the true light. As you have addressed me with moderation and in frankness, I will treat you with equal candour and give you a brief narrative of the reasons for demolition of the washing place. As far back as 1909 it has been common knowledge in Cawnpore that a new road running through the Machhli Bazar quarter would mean the demolition of a large number of buildings on the route, and there is no doubt that the scheme was being carefully watched by persons interested in those buildings. I find that in March of that year 1909, a memorial was submitted suggesting an alternative route and mentioning incidentally that A.B. road as then aligned would destroy three mosques and two temples. I mention this to show that no reasonable man can pretend that the people of Cawnpore had no knowledge of or were not interested in what was proposed. After the alignment of the road had been finally settled the plans were offered for public examination in the ordinary manner. I place a copy of the road plan before you. From it you will see that a portion of the courtyard of the mosque as well as the place was proposed for acquisition. The mosque occupied the whole of plot No. 90 and a portion of plot No. 89 as has been tested by measurement on the spot and the remarks in your memorial on this point as well as certain erroneous statements which have been based on a mistaken reading of the map. In further confirmation of our conviction that the acquisition of part of the mosque was neither unknown nor the subject of protest we have the fact that

in November 1911 the *Mutawalis* of the mosque petitioned the Municipal Board regarding the sale of the adjoining house which occupied the remaining portion of plot No. 89. From this petition it appears that the western wall of that house had been used by the mosque as an enclosure wall of its courtyard on the east. The sale of the house and the removal of its materials in the words of the *Mutawalis* themselves 'would mean dismantling the mosque'. They therefore asked the wall to be allowed to stand. The special land acquisition officer, Mr. Avadh Behari Lal, examined the matter on the spot and reported in writing that the wall should be left for the meantime as the 'portion will probably be available when the bathroom is taken'. The papers were placed before the sub-Committee which was dealing with city improvements and the proceedings of that Committee were placed before the Municipal Board. There were Mahommedan gentlemen on both those bodies and consequently it is impossible to say that the Mahommedans are not aware of two facts namely that the eastern boundary of the mosques did not belong to the mosque at all, and that part of the building was to be taken for the road. I am not however so much concerned with what was the knowledge of the Mahommedan public on the subject. It is perfectly clear that the *Mutawalis* of the mosque with whom in the first instance we had to deal were thoroughly aware of the position, and there is no record whatever of any objection having been offered to the proposed acquisition.

I come now to my visit to Cawnpore in November 1912. On that occasion I went personally to the scene in order to inspect the Telis temple against the removal of which I had a number of protests. I must have been standing within a few yards of the mosque although I do not remember seeing it and no body brought it to my notice. The members of the Board and other citizens of Cawnpore were with me and the conversation so far as I recollect was free and general. Yet no one made any grievance whatsoever of the mosque or of any grievance connected with it. At my subsequent meeting with the Board at the Circuit House a Mahommedan member just at the close of the proceedings put a question to me of which I cannot pretend to remember the exact terms. My impression, however is that he enquired whether the alteration in route which would be necessitated by sparing the temple would do damage to any of the mosques. There were apparently two mosques on the road, one on either side. I had never heard of the matter before and had to consult the Chairman before answering this gentleman. The Chairman informed me that though the bathroom of one of the mosques was being acquired in any case, the alteration of the road on which we had just decided would not involve any further encroachment upon the mosques, I accordingly answered my questioner in the negative. A subsequent examination of the maps has shown conclusively that the decision to spare the temple did not prejudice the mosque. On ‌.e contra by dividing one original broad road into two narrower sections it was found sible to diminish the area of the mosque premises which originally h. en marked for acquisition, to take

only the washing place and preserve the strip of courtyard which it had previously been decided to acquire. The suggestion which I have seen that the sparing of the temple was reserved by sacrificing a larger portion of the mosque is untrue.

These then, gentlemen, are facts which were before myself and the local authorities when the present agitation first arose. They indicated that there was no real grievance, no feelings of outraged religion, no desire to interfere with the execution of very necessary improvement. On the contrary we have every reason to believe that the people directly interested in the mosque were aware of the proposals and consented to what has all along been the intention of the local authorities, namely the removal of a small part of the building from the eastern to the northern wall without expense to the mosque or inconvenience to worshippers. When therefore protests began to reach me at the end of March and the beginning of April last I found some difficulty in understanding why the position had changed. I am delighted to have your assurance that the reason of the change is not any jealousy of the good fortune of the Hindus in having their temple preserved. It is a matter of sincere regret to me if the feelings of my Mahommedan friends have been hurt by such an assumption. But if this was not the reason for the unexpected outburst of protests, some reason had to be looked for. It was fresh in my mind that a similar arrangement for a slight alteration in the structure of a mosque at Lucknow had been cordially accepted by the Mahommedans of that city and many other instances of the same kind occurred to me, they have no doubt occurred to you. What therefore had happened to make the proposals of the city improvement trust in Cawnpore so objectionable. Was the washing place more sacred than the appendages of the mosque which had been moved amicably in Lucknow and elsewhere ? Did any special religious sentiment attach to this *wazu-khana* or *wazukhanas* in general.... On this point I assure you, Gentlemen, that I did not rush to a conclusion. I did not, it is true, consult doctors of law as I have since done with somewhat varying results. But I did consult a number of Mahommedan gentlemen whom I know to be orthodox and representatives of their class and thoroughly reliable. My information was that the *wazukhana* and the *Istinjakhana* have not the same sanctity as the place of worship proper. Local enquiry seemed to afford confirmation of this in the evidence which was given me regarding the wearing of shoes in this part of the building. That evidence of I believe in spite of attacks which have been made upon it in the Press and I think you will agree with me, gentlemen, on a dispassionate consideration of the facts as distinct from technicalities that there is a part of the mosque premises in which worshippers wear shoes and that there is a part in which the ordinary practice in India is to put shoes off. To the average mind it would seem that the same sanctity can hardly attach to the former as the latter, and that is the meaning—of what has been said regarding the comparative sanctity of the washing place.

I notice from your memorial—again with sincere regret—that a suggestion

of Government that the washing place has not the same sanctity as the inner portion of the mosque has wounded your feelings more than any other phase in this unfortunate affair. I can only say that the statement was made in all good faith, that it had the support of a strong body of orthodox Mahommedan opinion, and that was in no way meant to wound your feelings or hurt your susceptibilities. Knowing me as most of you do, I trust that you will accept this assurance.

I come now to the request with which your memorial concludes, a request that I should order the demolished washing place to be restored. As I have told you I am ready and always have been ready to give to the mosque with all necessary dedication or other formalities an area on the north side which will be more than sufficient for a washing place as well as to reconstruct the washing place on that area or present to mosque a sum of money which will allow the *Mutawalis* to construct it for themselves. That offer, made in all good faith, has long been open and remains open. If, however, your request extends to the reconstruction of the washing place on the site which has been acquired, the position is different. Had we met some weeks ago and discussed the matter as we have done to-day, I cannot say what the result might have been. But the whole state of affairs has been altered by the events of the 3rd August and I regret it is impossible for me now to pass any such order. By expressing regret I am using no mere formal words, for I see here to-day some of my best friends, Indian gentlemen whose opinions I highly value and whose advice I would implicitly accept in nine cases out of ten. But in this case I have to think of the broad administrative considerations which underlie the maintenance of Law and Order, and the neglect of which would mean misgovernment and chaos. Like you I cannot discuss the calamity of the 3rd August while still *subjudice*, though I may join with you as I sincerely do in deploring the loss of life and suffering which have occurred. But without in any way anticipating the results of the judicial enquiry it is my clear duty to proceed on the principle that Government cannot accept or appear to accept the dictation of force.

And now, gentlemen, I venture to ask your help. You know that the British Government is no wanton destroyer of your sacred buildings. You know on the contrary how it has preserved, restored and beautified many Mahommedan monuments of which you are now most proud. You also know that in this matter of city improvements minor structural alternations such as was proposed in Cawnpore cases have often been carried out with the consent and goodwill of the Mahommedan public without any invocation of ecclesiastical law and with a sole eye to the public good. There are many instances of this which I might mention in different parts of the province, but it is unnecessary to do more than remind you of certain recent examples of what I mean with which you and I are thoroughly familiar within two miles of where we are sitting to-day. Why has the spirit of the people changed so entirely and why has the arrangement which was acceptable in Lucknow a few months ago become impossible in Cawnpore. Now surely in view of the facts

as I have endeavoured to put them before you this morning you will agree that the present case has suffered from exaggeration and misunderstanding. I am told that crores of Mahommedan hearts have been wounded. But what is it that has wounded them, is it anything that Government has done, or is it not rather the travesty of the Government's acts and motives which has been provided for their consumption. You ask me to allay the growing excitement and heal the wounded feeling of the Moslem community. I will gladly do all that is reasonable and possible in this direction, but it is in your power to do infinitely more. It is in your power to contradict the untruths which are being spread abroad, to inform the Moslem community of the true facts and to ask them to place confidence in the good-will of Government, which has not thought except for their advancement and welfare.

***Source*: Government of India—Home Department Political Deposit A Proceeding 1913, Nos. 100–18.**

9

THE COMRADE ON THE MOSLEM MISSION TO ENGLAND

The sudden departure to England of Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan, Honorary Secretary, All-India Moslem League, and Mr. Mohamed Ali by 6th September's Mail Steamer has touched the imagination of the entire Moslem community. Both are well-known to the country and need no fresh introduction. The object of their mission can best be explained in their own words which they said to an Associated Press interviewer :

'Events of great moment and of a far-reaching character, vitally affecting the Mussulman, have been taking place in rapid succession during the last two or three years both in India and abroad, and it appears to our friends, as it appears to ourselves also, that a right understanding of the Moslems point of view is absolutely necessary in the interests of Government no less than in the interests of Mussulmans themselves. Our friends have, therefore, advised us, and we agree with them, that at the present juncture, it is necessary for us to go to England for the purpose of explaining the Indian Moslems' point of view and the salient feature of the true Moslem situation in India and abroad to His Majesty's Ministers, Members of Parliament and other influential men in Great Britain as well as the British nation at large through important organs of the press and by other suitable means and to convince them of the

essential loyalty of the Moslem community to His Majesty's person and throne and of the justice of Moslem claims.'

To some minds the nature of the mission may be enshrouded in mystery, but to us it is as clear as anything. Who among us is not conscious of the fact that the prestige of Islam has never been so low as during the last two or three years. The daring Italian brigandage upon Tripoli, the bloody French campaigns in Morocco, and the savage war of extermination in the Balkan Peninsula are events at which, not to speak of the Mussulmans who are directly concerned in them on account of their extra-territorial patriotism, even non-Moslem communities have shuddered. It is a pity that notwithstanding her position as the greatest Moslem Power, Great Britain has throughout maintained an unfriendly, though not actually hostile, attitude to Moslem countries and did not lift its little finger to advocate the cause of the weak and the oppressed, so much so that even when Turkey by a favourable turn of the wheel of fortune recaptured Adrianople the British Ministers did not hesitate to wound the feelings of the Mussulman subjects of the Empire by their irresponsible and uncalled-for utterances. But the British Foreign Secretary has, though quite late in the day shown some signs of understanding the Moslem attitude. In his speech in the House of Commons on the 12th of August 1913, when he reviewed the situation regarding the Balkans, he was pleased to refer to Turkey and said 'that no Minister could speak of these matters without remembering that the King had many millions of Mahommedan subjects. But we had absolute and entire responsibility only so far as seeing that inside British Dominions racial sentiment and the feeling of Mahommedan subject were respected and had full scope. We have fulfilled and will fulfil that duty. Moreover, I hold that our policy should never be one of intolerance or of wanton and unprovoked aggression against a Mussulman Power, but we cannot undertake to protect Mussulman Powers outside British dominions from the consequences of their action'. In the above words we were assured, as we have often been before, that the fulfilment of the memorable Proclamation of Victoria the Good, was an imperative duty, which His Majesty's Government owes among others to their Moslem subjects, at least inside the British Dominions. But within the last few months events have happened in India proper, which—not to speak of other sections of the population—have deeply affected the Mussulmans of all classes and views. The tragedy enacted in and near the Machhli Bazar Mosque of Cawnpore has not only sent a thrill of horror and indignation into Moslem hearts, but has filled all the peace-loving and law-abiding classes throughout the length and breadth of the country with terror, leading to misgivings as to the safety of life in case of even purely constitutional opposition to any individual member of the bureaucracy. They have seen what a hollow mockery it was that passes under the name of local self-Government. They have seen how men like Messrs. Sim and Tyler are able even at this stage of constitutionalism to carry their resolutions through, however opposed they

may be to commonsense and policy, in the teeth of all the opposition. They have seen how the highest authority of appeal in the Province is pleased, of course not without sorrow which, strange enough, is too strong to be affected by the vigorous protests of the whole Moslem India, to justify instead of rectifying the blunders of his subordinates.

Again, there is the question of the liberty of Press, which has of late been rising in the scale of public notice. The Press Act of 1910 has given a rude check to the progress of what is known in the West as the Fourth Estate, and has almost choked the mouth of the Indian Journalist who gasps at the freedom of writing which is practically enjoyed by the Anglo-Indian section of the Press in spite of the dreaded Act. The worst features of the Act have been signally brought to light by the judgment on the application of Mr. Mohamed Ali, by a Special Bench of the Calcutta High Court, against an order of the Bengal Government declaring, under Section 12 of the said Act, a perfectly harmless pamphlet entitled 'Come Over into Macedonia and Help Us' forfeited to His Majesty. In the course of the judgment we have seen how the learned judges have exposed the absurdity of Section 4, which condemns the printing and publishing of 'any newspaper', book or other documents containing any words, signs or visible representations which are likely or may have a tendency, directly or indirectly, whether by reference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication or *otherwise* (the italics are ours) to bring into hatred or contempt any classe or section of His Majesty's subjects in British India'.

Again, there is another momentous question of the treatment of Indians in self-governing colonies. especially South Africa and Canada, where Indians are subjected to severest of all wounds to national self-respect. Both Messrs Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali have amply shown in their daily public life that they have not been unresponsive to the calls of duty. They gave eloquent expression of their feelings when they said in their interview at Bombay : 'But the object of our journey is by no means sectarian or exclusively communal. We firmly believe that the progress and well-being of the Mussulmans are bound up with the progress and well-being of the country in which they live. The present carries in its womb the hopes and fears cammon to every community in India, and we shall be failing in our duty not only as Indians but as Mussulmans also if we do not strive during our sojourn in England to convert our fears into hopes and to materialize the hopes which we share with all our fellow-countrymen. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale also is in England at the present moment and we hope to secure his sympathy and co-operation'.

No doubt, as Moslems Messrs Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali being not cribbed, cabined, and confined have to respond to the demands of extra-territorial patriotism, yet the fact is not to be lost sight of that the territorial patriotism, is no cant with them. Two of their eminent co-religionists, Mr. Jinnah and Khwaja Kamal-ud-din, are already in England and they look

forward with hope to their hearty co-operation. Of course, His Highness the Aga Khan is also in Europe, and they are confident of obtaining every encouragement and assistance from him. Again, there is the Hon. Mr. Gokhale, upon whose support they have reasons to calculate. There may be others—Indians, as well as Britishers—who may be ready to champion the cause of right and justice irrespective of their religious or political views. They have sailed full of hope and of confidence in the goodness of their cause and in the desire as well as the ability of the great liberty—loving British nation to do them justice.

As for the results of their mission it will be premature to say anything at present. The *Bengalee* is of opinion that 'with Sir John Hewett freshly appealing to the British democracy to believe the man on the spot and Mr. Montague expressing his desire to give a *carte blanche* to the Indian Civil Service the voyage may not lead to any tangible result. But we Orientals are not given to worrying about the result. To us it is given only to work and the rest lies in the lap of the gods.'

But our view is that though there are obvious difficulties in the way of our political missionaries, yet there is one consolation to look up to. The British instinct of justice though somewhat impaired in individual cases is yet unsurpassed among the nations of the world, and much may be expected on that account. In the meantime, we pray to the Granter of all blessings to give these Sons of Islam strength enough to cope with the difficulties in their way and bring them back in our midst later with honour and glory. Whatsoever may be the result of their mission, we feel certain they will do their best.

Victory and defeat are matters of luck;
But, O Mir ! thy poor heart did make a good fight.

Source : The Comrade, 13 September 1913.

10

LETTER FROM SIR REGINALD CRADDOCK TO HARDINGE
11 September 1913

All thinking and sensible Mahommedans know that there is no really solid foundation in the grievances, many of them will say as privately, but few, if any, however, loyal, will have the courage to say so publicly. They cannot bear the taunt that would be levelled at them by those who are putting the strings, and therefore they are surrendering their free will and

commonsense at the dictation of Mohammed Ali & Co. To yield to this clamour will be to bestow a triumph on the young Mahommedan party, who will have no more gibe to throw at the fatuity of Mahommedan loyalty, as compared with Mahommedan agitation.

Source : **Hardinge Paper, 1913.**

11

LETTER FROM SIR JAMES MESTON TO HARDINGE

11 September 1913

'...I see Mohamed Ali has hurried off to England, accompanied by Wazir Hasan, the pushing little Secretary to the Moslem League. They want to get home before me with their gabled tale.... Wazir Hasan is a man of no intrinsic merit or importance, and if Mohammed Ali were received, then goodbye to any hope of the respectable Mahommedan leaders rallying to oppose him....'

During the ensuing month Nawab Ishaq Khan, the Present Secretary of the Aligarh College, is going to Simla.... He is absolutely staunch, a convinced enemy of Mohamed Ali and his gang. Your Excellency recently gave him the title of Nawab, for which he is genuinely grateful; and a little encouragement would cheer him immensely in his uphill fight to maintain the traditions and prestige of the College.

Source : **Hardinge Papers, 1913.**

12

RESOLUTION PASSED AT A MEETING OF THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE, LUCKNOW

30 September 1913

I have the honour to forward for submission to the Secretary of State for India the following resolution passed at a meeting of the council of the All-India Moslem League held on the 19th September 1913 :

RESOLUTION

'That the Council of the All-India Moslem League places on record its gratefulness to Syed Wazir Hasan and Mr. Mohammed Ali for their recent undertaking to place fully before the authorities and the public to England, the views, needs and aspirations of the Mussulmans of India in cooperation with our branch League and our friends in that country; and expresses its sincere confidence in them and in their capacity to represent true Moslem interests, trusting that the British authorities and the British public will give them a sympathetic hearing.'

Source : **Home Political Department, November 1913, No. 145.**

13

LETTER FROM A LOYAL MUSSULMAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE COMRADE

I hope I will not be branded as an alarmist if I avail myself of the medium of your esteemed paper to draw attention to a growing discontent and unrest among the Mahommedans which I can at once put down to the incompetence and want of tact displayed by the U. P. Officials in handling the Cawnpore Mosque question. The unrest is not only real but pervades all classes of Mahommedans, whether rich or poor, educated or uneducated, throughout the length and breadth of the country. Another feature of this discontent is that it has not grown out of any desire for Swaraj or similar political concession, but from a genuine belief that their rulers have ceased to have any respect for their religion—a belief, no doubt, produced in their minds by the proceedings and the measures adopted by the local officials in the recent Cawnpore affair. The conduct and attitude of the U.P. officials strangely contrast with the recent sympathetic and reassuring speech of the Viceroy, and the conclusion becomes irresistible that the pronounced policy of the Government is not apparently being carried out on account of the disloyalty of its subordinates. In the Cawnpore affair the main issues involved have always been evaded, and no proper inquiry has been made into the legitimate grievances of the community. Where genuine grievances exist resentment follows, and it is only natural that these should find vent in the newspapers not only to draw the attention of the higher authorities, but also to obtain the support of the public opinion. In such a case it is the plain duty of those responsible for the Administration to institute a prompt inquiry to ascertain where the wrong lies and to apply the proper remedy speedily. Instead of

following this reasonable course authorities are trying to gag the Press and the public speakers and thereby committing the same fatal error which eight years before resulted in the formation of secret societies and the growth of anarchism among the Hindus and the Marhattas much to the discredit of both the rulers and the ruled. The Press Act gag may serve to shut the mouth of the public organs and speakers, but it can never stifle feelings and sentiments, and such a remedy only proves worse than the disease itself. The closing of the ordinary outlets for ventilating grievances can only serve to exasperate the people thereby adding fuel to the fire. Ever since this unfortunate Cawnpore affair the authorities have started a campaign against the Mahommedan Press. Newspapers are being indiscriminately proscribed and securities demanded of them and forfeited on the merest pretexts. The judgment in the suit brought by the Editor of the *Comrade* in connection with proscription of the pamphlet 'Come Over into Macedonia and Help Us' leaves no doubt of the fact that the Executive are taking undue advantage of the unusual powers reserved for them in the Act. Sir Lawrence Jenkins has sufficiently indicated that a proper use has not been made of the Act in that case. The recent Press Act proceedings against the Local Urdu journal *Al-Hilal* shows that even the present liberal and advanced Government of Bengal are being gradually influenced and drawn into committing the same blunders which has become now a leading feature of the Administration of the United Provinces.

With the anarchism still remaining uneradicated and the agents of the secret societies watching for their opportunities to take in new recruits, I shudder to think what the effect of the present official indiscretions may be upon a yet unsophisticated and traditionally loyal community whose only fault has been an excessive love for religion. The situation is extremely grave and requires delicate handling, and it is to be hoped that their Excellencies Lords Hardinge and Carmichael who have already earned a reputation as liberal and far-sighted statesmen should rise to the height of the occasion and resolutely set their face against a repetition of the mistaken policy which has largely been responsible for the anarchism and lawlessness and the creation of the unfortunate estrangement between the rulers and the ruled.

Source : The Comrade, 4 October 1913.

14

DEMI-OFFICIAL LETTER FROM THE HON'BLE MR. J.G. CUMMING, C.I.E., TO THE HON'BLE MR. H.WHEELLER, C.I.E. DARJEELING

10 October 1913

In addition to these personal goadings the writings in the *Al-Hilal* and the *Comrade* newspapers have to a great extent fomented this excitement. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Editor of the *Al-Hilal* is a son of the late Maùlana Fakhruddin who had a number of disciples amongst Punjabis, and the son naturally possesses very considerable influence with them. His somewhat violent advocacy of the cause of the Cawnpore Mahommedans has no doubt contributed largely to the present state of ferment on the Colootolla side of the town. There were also highly inflammable articles in the *Mussulman*, the Editor of which is Maulvi Najibur Rahman; and in the *Hablul Matin*, the publisher of which is Maulvi Agha Saiyd Jellaluddin Hossain Moidul Islam. The Mahommedans of Calcutta have in fact received the impression that the Cawnpore Mahommedans have been most unjustly treated; and they are discouraged by the unwillingness of the Viceroy to interfere. The enclosed article in the *Mussulman* of the 22nd August appears to state their opinion with fair precision. The last sentence of that article is as follows : 'The Mahommedans knew and believed that the British Government was not wanton destroyed of their sacred buildings, but unfortunately the events at Delhi and Cawnpore have almost shaken that belief, and it is for the Government to reassure the public mind and restore that belief.'

There is considerable excitement amongst the student community. Their impressionable minds have been easily influenced by the perfervid style adopted by the Mahommedan Press. As for the ordinary Mahommedans, that is, the man who can read write, and is capable of being influenced by speeches or by the Press, he is troubled by a vague religious sentiment that Mahommedan places of worship are in danger and that he has a duty to perform in the matter. He does not know that the main building of the mosque at Cawnpore has not been touched at all. The better class and the more thinking portions of the community view the situation challenged, may be a precedent for larger interference in other place. They complain bitterly that there was no need for firing on a mob that was not armed, the members of which were only piling bricks on bricks without any mortar. They think it was an act of recklessness on the part of the authorities and blame Sir James Meston for having supported the action of his subordinates. Some are prepared to go further and say that Europeans in India have not the respect for the life of the Indians that they ought to have. The bitterness of feeling with reference to the Cawnpore mosque is due to other causes also, most of which are political. The pronouncement of Sir Edward Grey regarding Turkey has given great

offence to the educated Mahommedans who strongly sympathize with Turkey and who think rightly or wrongly that the trouble of Turkey is largely due to the sympathetic attitude of the British Government; and as regards East Bengal, the resentment caused by the undoing of the partition which the Mahommedans have not yet forgiven, make them somewhat prone to exaggerate the effect of every little incident which tends to show want of sympathy on the part of the British Government with the aspirations of the Mahommedan community.

This attitude of mind indicates to some extent the causes which have created among certain classes of Mahommedans a feeling of dissatisfaction towards the British Government. The events in Turkey had prepared the ground for sowing the seeds which, some people were anxious to sow, and Abul Kalam and his supporters have found a ready welcome. As regards the student community, it is believed that the young Mahommedans who deal in politics will change their tactics and will gradually make common cause with the Congress party and will join the Congress which hitherto they had avoided as they were unwilling to cast in their lot with Hindu leaders. It is not unlikely that this year there will be a large number of Mahommedans on the Congress, than at any time before. This is a tendency which will, strengthen with the increase of education. The Mahommedan leaders, however, know that any general union of the Hindu and Mahommedan communities in social and political matters is not possible. They believe that it is unnecessary to coerce and frighten the Government in order to obtain political concession in the same way in which they think the Hindus have done with conspicuous success.

The Mahommedan situation today is naturally different from what it was 20 years ago. In those days, the Mahommedan leaders were generally Government servants and naturally they never went against the wishes of Government. Leaders of the type of Nawab Amir Ali (the father of the Muttawali of Hooghly Imambara), Nawab Abdul Latif and Nawab Amir Hossain would have very small following now-a-days. Mahommedan leaders are at present much more numerous than formerly and possess more education and greater independence of character. Any leader who tries to support Government on all occasions, will soon be discredited; and it is believed that it was out of such an apprehension that the Honourable Nawab Saiyid Nawab Ali Chowdhury recently put himself at the head of the Cawnpore agitation in Calcutta and presided at the Town Hall demonstration on the 3rd August last. The action of the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca in controlling his co-religionists has been most praiseworthy and he has done admirable service to Government. But on the other hand, it cannot be denied that this very conduct on his part may tend to lessen his influence with Mahommedans. As regards Mr. A.K. Ghuznavi, the Mussulman member of Bengal in the Imperial Legislative Council, it was resolved at the meeting of the Mahommedan Defence Association on the 17th September that the complete silence of this gentleman on the Cawnpore mosque question was viewed with sorrow. This

question was held to be the most burning religious topic of the day, and his silence was considered contrary to the expectations formed by his professed services and to Islam. He was requested to pronounce his opinion on the subject, so as to dissociate the Mahommedans of Bengal from the responsibility for his action or rather inaction.

For some years past there has been a feeling amongst Mahommedan leaders that in these days mere loyalty does not pay; that political concessions are not made as a matter of grace, but are yielded under pressure; and that however much Government may profess to disapprove Congress ideals, this disapproval has not had any effect either in shutting out individual members of Congress from high offices under Government; has Government been able to resist the demands of the Congress party. This is the new creed of the Mussulman politicians; the Honourable Mr. Fazl Haq is one of the ablest exponents of this creed in Bengal. As regards the particular case of the demolition of the Cawnpore mosque, it is believed that no explanation that it was necessary to fire on the mob will satisfy the Mahommedans in their present state of mind.

Source: Government of India—Home Department—Political A. Proceedings October 1913, Nos. 101–18.

15

SYED ALI IMAM (LAW MEMBER) ON THE KANPUR MOSQUE
2 September 1913

This unfortunate case has greater potentiality for trouble than any since 1857. It is uniting all sections of the Mahommedan community of India into a common belief that their '*Deen*' is in danger. Apart altogether from the merits of the questions whether or not the acquisition and subsequent demolition of a part of the Machhli Bazar mosque was legal or otherwise, the religious passions of the Mussulmans have been roused and a fire has been kindled that is spreading fast. In times of excitement people do not pause to consider whether they have reason on their side. This is exactly the position in which the Mahommedans stand in relation to the Cawnpore 'tragedy' of the 3rd of August last. More often than not it is the unreasonable that appeals to the imagination. Once a silly story of greased cartridges plunged the country into appalling and untold misery. Another silly story that the British Government has departed from its traditional policy of non-interference with the religions of the people is receiving currency. It is to be hoped

that this is only a passing phase. I for one do not think it is so with the Mahommedans unless some immediate action is taken to a dissipate this erroneous impression under which they are labouring. Right or wrong, the Mussulmans community of India believes that from start to finish official proceedings with reference to this mosque are marked with highhandedness and that the disastrous results that have followed were preventible without shedding Muslim blood on consecrated and hallowed ground. An appreciable loss of life, including the old, the young and the child, has stirred Mahommedan sentiment to its deepest depths. The literate and the illiterate, the orthodox and the heterodox, the men of the new school and those of the old have all been equally affected. My latest information is that the idea of 'the sacrilege' and 'the martyrdom' has entered into the *zenanas*, and the influence of the women is on the side of the illconsidered but popular grievances. In my humble opinion a deeply resentful and morbid state of mind of an emotional people like the Mahommedans of India should not be permitted to grow and expand in the best interests of good government. We may be strong enough to repress, but surely we shall be stronger if we remove the very call for repression. It is impossible not to sympathise with the difficult position in which Sir James Meston finds himself. Obviously he and his officers could not have anticipated the turn affairs have taken. It was probably thought that expeditious acquisition proceedings and a prompt demolition would close to subject without much noise or excitement. Perhaps nine men out of ten would have done exactly what the United Provinces Government did. But as is very well known, it is the unexpected that always happens, and we are face to face with a situation which, if not perilous yet, threatens to be so, if remedial measures are postponed or unduly delayed. Much of course depends on Sir James Meston himself. I do not fail to see how much he stands in need of our support, but I doubt very much if in that alone any remedy lies. The matter has already emerged from provincial concern into an All-India political problem. It was fortunate that the deputation he received was only a provincial one, and that although his reply has in some degree fettered his hands, there is still room to reconsider the position, were he disposed to receive an All-India Mahommedan deputation which might clearly and emphatically express its disapproval of defiance of Law and Order, and frankly throw itself on his generosity to restore the demolished portion of the mosque without prejudice to the Cawnpore trials that are dragging their slow course. My own views are that those alone who incited the disturbance should be proceeded against, and that the ignorant fanatics who were misguided and misled by agitators should be given a general pardon after conviction before the Sessions Judge who is about to try them. As far as I have been able to gauge Mahommedan feeling nothing short of the restoration of the demolished part of the mosque will restore confidence and peace of mind. It will be deplorable if Sir James Meston overlooks the importance of conferring upon the Mahommedans of India as a gift what the future may transform into a

demand, irresistible and uncompromising. I have not the slighest intention to appear to be an alarmist. I am actuated by the sole desire to nip in the bud, and at its very inception, an agitation which has in it the worst elements of fanaticism and bigotry. I do not believe in keeping the sword of the Sircar always out of the scabbard, as I have faith in the vigorous and active use of it once it is out. Sir James Meston's reply to the deputation was tempered with sympathy and reconciliation, though he was firm in his refusal as regards the restoration. He has only to carry the spirit of sympathy a little further and save Mahommedan loyalty from permanent estrangement, for, I fear, a refusal to reconsider his decision will end in nothing else.

Source: **Government of India—Home Department—Political A. Proceedings, October 1913, Nos. 101–18.**

16

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN S. WAZIR HASAN AND SYED AMEER ALI WHICH LED TO THE MUSLIM LEAGUE CRISIS

I

LETTER FROM S. AMEER ALI TO WAZIR HASAN

22 October 1913

If you will send me the papers together with your memorandum on the question of 'the separation of the judicial and executive functions', I shall be glad to discuss the matter with Mr. Latif, our Vice-President, and decide upon the best course to be taken on the subject.

I desire to take this opportunity of mentioning to you one or two matters in connection with the London League regarding which I think there ought to be a clear conception in India. This League was organised with the object of watching the general interests of the Mussulman subjects of His Majesty in the centre of the British Empire and to serve as an exponent of Mussulmans public opinion directly to His Majesty's Government, the fountain-head of all authority. This object has been consistently and conscientiously kept in view and this League has, in a constitutional way, done more to enhance the influence and credit of the Mussulman community than our friends in India are disposed to admit or appear to appreciate. It has without beat of drums or recourse to fictitious methods of advertisement obtained substantial concessions for the Mussulman people, and done more than any other body in drawing public and official attention to Mussulman requirements. It must not be forgotten that London is the nerve-centre of the Empire and a well

equipped and wisely conducted Mussulman organisation is of vital importance.

If the League here is not properly supported from India it will have to be closed. I am perfectly certain that such a contingency would be disastrous to our people. It would bring discredit on the community as a whole; it would prove that they have no communal feeling or cohesiveness or a sense of the supreme importance of being represented in the centre of the Empire. Once closed you may rest assured it would never be revived again. If this League is to continue it must have adequate support and adequate guarantees that the support will be regularly and punctually forthcoming.

I hope that before you leave England you will be good enough to inform us of the views of your Council, whether they wish to contribute properly to 'the maintenance of this League which is doing the imperial part of their work.

II

REPLY FROM S. WAZIR HASAN TO AMEER ALI

I returned last night from Paris, after having seen H.H. the Aga Khan, as you had suggested, and on my return, found your letter of the 22nd October waiting for me.

'H.H. the Aga Khan discussed the whole matter with me, more than once, and also referred to a letter that he had received from you, but which he could not show me, as it was marked 'Private'. His considered judgment on the matter is given in the enclosed letter, which he handed me in order to deliver to you on my return, and which he read out to me before he closed it. Needless to say, I entirely agree with him, and Mr. Mohammed Ali, who had discussed the matter with the Aga Khan on the first day of our visit to Paris, before he returned hurriedly, also agrees with us. I would add, however, that the object of the dinner which H.H. the Aga Khan proposes to give is, as we have always maintained, not to crow over the success achieved in the Cawnpore affair, but, in fact, to explain to the influential men in the country, including ex-Viceroys and some Members of the Indian Council, and the Under-Secretary of State for India, the essentially loyal attitude of the Mussulmans. The position is this. Out in India petty officials whose actions may be criticised locally or provincially, take the first opportunity of prejudicing us in the eyes of heads of local government and of the Government of India, and, as we have seen recently, some papers in England take the matter up, and prejudice us in the eyes of the India Office and the ministers and the public here. No communal work can be done satisfactorily if those who are working under all these difficulties in India fail even to get the ear of the officials and the influential people here, and not only clear their own position, but, what is much more important, clear the position of the community. The dinner which H.H. the Aga Khan proposes to give in conjunction with you, is meant to provide us, who have been sent as accredited agents of the whole

community, with an opportunity for explaining the real attitude of the Massulmans towards Government, and certainly not to crow over temporary triumphs. In the dinner itself we shall have ample opportunity of showing all this, and of thanking the Viceroy for the statesmanlike manner in which he has settled the whole affairs, without prejudicing the prestige of Government. If, however such an opportunity is denied to us, we shall have to do the same thing in another manner, on public platforms and in public press, and in the last resort, it will be my painful duty to tell the members of the League on my return to India, that if things go wrong in India, it is no use trusting anybody here to do us justice, and in fact, I do not see how I can get out of a clear explanation to the members of the League that the President of their own London Branch is unwilling to assist the community, even when he has to risk nothing and sacrifice nothing. The Aga Khan's position is a very delicate one, as you know, but I must say I was agreeably surprised to find that he was prepared to take the responsibility of a dinner of this character, without the least suggestion from either of us.

'A little regard for our own dignity compels me to say that we do not in the least desire any personal appreciation of our labours, and if this dinner was to come off at the end of our stay here, there might have been some suspicion that it was meant to crown our work with generous appreciation from two such eminent Mussulmans as yourself and the Aga Khan. As it is, it is really an introduction of us to the influential men in England. But even if it were to be a mere appreciation of our work, I have no hesitation in saying that I do not think it would have been undeserved. Out in India, we have to contend every day with difficulties of a nature of which one who has been away from the country for so long, can have little conception, and if our own eminent men shrink from giving us some recognition, we have only two alternatives, the alternative of the weak man, to go under and sell our community, as so many others have done before us, or the alternative of the strong man, to work alone for the good cause, but, at the same time, to show to our people that we work alone, and without assistance from those from whom assistance had so rightly been expected.

'Before I conclude this part of my letter, I may add that I have given your arguments against your joining H.H. the Aga Khan as a host, all the consideration that they rightly deserve; but I must say, neither H. H. the Aga Khan nor I feel convinced that the very remote possibility of the dinner being interpreted as a triumphal banquet, when we can all take every precaution that it should not be so interpreted, can out-weigh the certain advantages, and, in fact, the essential necessity, of our explaining the true attitude of ourselves and of the Indian Mussulmans to men in high quarters in England. I hope and trust our arguments and those of H.H. the Aga Khan will convince you, and you will be pleased to take part in the function as a host, conjointly with H.H. the Aga Khan. The time at our disposal is now very short, and I hope you will give us your final decision in the course of the day.

'With regard to your letter of the 22nd, I hope to send shortly the papers with regard to the separation of the judicial and executive functions. I note that you do not mention in your letter anything about the other two matters which I discussed with you last Saturday in common with Mr. Mahommed Ali, namely, the establishment of executive councils in provinces where they do not exist, and the repeal of the Press Act. This, I suppose, is mere inadvertence, and I hope you will call a meeting of the League as soon as convenient, wherein all these matters can be fully discussed, and our course of action decided upon.

'May I assure you very cordially that we all appreciate the work which you have been doing here in the interests of our community, and, as you say 'without beat of drums or recourse to fictitious methods of advertisement'. May I also say that you do us little justice in thinking that we are wanting in proper appreciation of your labours, and have no conception of the importance and absolute necessity of maintaining an efficient and strong League in London. I can take no responsibility for the action of the parent League before my time, but you must have noticed that since the community has placed this burden on my shoulders I have not been idle, and, in fact, a very great deal has been accomplished under enormous difficulties and that too, 'without beat of drums or recourse to fictitious methods of advertisement'.

'I do recognise that an efficient League can be maintained here only at considerably increased cost, and I have discussed this matter with H.H. the Aga Khan, who I am glad to day, would be prepared to accept my considered suggestions in this behalf.

As regards the parent League itself, you cannot be unaware of the fact that if it has starved you here, it has had to starve itself also, in India. But now that it is coming more and more into line with the wishes of the community, it is tapping new financial resources, and I hope on my return to succeed in a great measure in collecting together a large fund to serve as a Reserve Fund for our political work. Naturally the London Branch must be supported out of it, but our efforts to convince the members about your requirements here would succeed in proportion to the support which the London Branch gives to the work of the Parent League and its projects.

'I would suggest that an early meeting of the League should be called, in which I shall place before the members here the views of myself and my council fully and frankly, and I cannot think of any other method of threshing the whole question out with the help of our friends here. I may add that I have not been idle here as regards the problem of increasing the members of the League in London, and I have had full and frank discussions with several well meaning and energetic young men, whom I have found both sober and earnest. I am glad to say their views, to a large extent, tally with mine, and I am determined before I leave, to rally them round the League, and, in fact, to re-establish it on a much firmer footing.

I have expressed my views very frankly, both because it is my nature to

be as candid as I can be, consistently with the needs of the situation, and because I am not likely to have an opportunity of expressing my views, and the views of my council, to you and the members of the League here in person for some length of time. But, I trust, if in anything I have said I have been too frank, you will forgive me, and accept my assurance that I mean to assist the London branch rather than kill it or leave it in its present condition.

III

LETTER FROM S. AMEER ALI TO WAZIR HASAN

25 October 1913

I am in receipt of your letter enclosing one from H. H. the Aga Khan and I repeat that I am always glad to show hospitality and courtesy to friends who come over from India.

I am, as I said before, quite willing to join the Aga Khan in a non-political dinner. His Highness, however, writes that a chance is desired for 'counteracting the false charge of the *Times* correspondent,' which makes the gathering a political function. In that case I should have to ask the sanction of the Lord Chancellor to participate.

As you wished for an immediate answer regarding the dinner, I must write to you later on the question of the London League (as I have a busy morning) and will ask the Secretary to convene a meeting of the Committee for an early date when His Highness is here, as I think his presence necessary on the occasion. Will you kindly let me know on which day he is to be here.

IV

LETTER FROM WAZIR HASAN TO AMEER ALI

26 October 1913

Many thanks for your letter of the 25th instant. For my own part I should harldy have thought that proposed dinner was other than non-political. It certainly is no more political than the work of the London Branch of the Moslem League. However, it is not for us to judge this matter, and if you feel that you must ask the sanction of the Lord Chancellor to participate, I hope in view of the fact that time is an essential consideration, you have already done so.

His Highness the Aga Khan comes here on the 28th instant, and does not remain here beyond the 31st instant. During this short interval all the arrangements for the dinner have to be made, and you yourself know what it means to give such a short notice to the guests. But the dinner is very necessary and if it is to be held at all it is no use delaying things. Please

let me know when you expect the Lord Chancellor's reply. May I suggest requesting him to send you a wire ? In any case I hope I shall have your definite answer early to-morrow.

I have told you the dates on which His Highness the Aga Khan will be here, and I trust you will have notice for a General Meeting of the League issued at your earliest convenience, so that His Highness may also be present on the occasion.

We ourselves are very anxious to come to a definite result before the end of the month, but it will be preferable to call a General Meeting, even if it has to be an Emergency Meeting, if your rules permit. But in any case a Committee Meeting should be called as soon as convenient to you and the whole programme of work laid before it for final decision.

V

LETTER FROM WAZIR HASAN TO AGA KHAN
26 October 1913

I am enclosing a copy of the letter I wrote to Mr. Ameer Ali on my return from Paris. I have received a reply from him and enclose a copy of it also for your perusal.

I have now asked Mr. Ameer Ali to obtain the requested sanction of the Lord Chancellor to which he makes reference in his letter. In my opinion the proposed dinner is not political in any sense of the term. That, however, is a point on which I do not think I am called upon to disagree with Mr. Ameer Ali. I have asked him to give me his final decision some time to-morrow.

VI

LETTER FROM AMEER ALI TO WAZIR HASAN
26 October 1913

Your letter of to-day's date. The Lord Chancellor does not transact business on Saturdays or Sundays nor by wire. I will send a letter by to-night's post.

I note that H. H. the Aga Khan will be here on the 29th. The Secretary of the League will be asked to convene a meeting of the Committee for that day.

VII

LETTER FROM C. A. TRAXTON TO WAZIR HASAN
27 October 1913

I am desired by Mr. Ameer Ali to send you the enclosed letter which has

just come to hand and beg the favour of your returing it to me.

VIII

LETTER FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CHANCELLOR TO AMEER ALI

27 October 1913

I put your letter of the 26th instant before the Lord Chancellor, and he desires me to say that he thinks that it would be wise not to attend the public dinner to which you refer.

IX

LETTER FROM AMEER ALI TO WAZIR HASAN

27 October 1913

I have now had time to consider your letter of the 25th instant. Its tone indicates the extraordinary attitude you have adopted towards me, with what authority from your League I am unable to tell. You say that unless I joined the Aga Khan in giving you and Mr. Mohammed Ali a public dinner you would hold me up 'to the members of the League as being unwilling to assist the community even when I have to risk nothing and sacrifice nothing'.

I note also your slightly-veiled insinuations as to selling our community'. I consider both your threat and innuendoes as unworthy of serious notice.

As the dinner question forms the key-note of your letter I deem it necessary, however, to recapitulate the circumstances connected with it. When you and your friend mentioned to me that H. H. the Aga Khan proposed to give you a public dinner, I told you that I considered it inadvisable and I wrote to him to the same effect. He, however, differed from me and pressed me to join the function as a host. I thereupon expressed to you my readiness to participate in a non-political complimentary dinner, but as the Aga Khan had made it clear that there would be political speeches, I wrote to you at the same time to say that I should have to obtain the sanction of the Head of the Judiciary of the British Empire. Because of my inability to join headlong in this affair you have chosen to send me an insulting letter containing contemptible insinuations—Insiunations which the secretary to an association of respectable and responsible Mussulmans in India should have refrained from levelling at one who has devoted his lifetime to promote the well-being of his people.

You also indicate that the subvention from the Central League to the London League would be in proportion to the support the latter gives to the 'work and projects' of the Central League. So far the London League has

cordially supported all projects which, in its considered judgment, it deemed to be for the benefit of our people and has refrained, with the object of maintaining an appearance of solidarity, from giving expression to its disapproval of resolutions which it considered inexpedient in the best interests of the community. From this course it will not deviate under my presidentship.

The condition which you now wish to impose on the discretion and judgment of the London League I regret I cannot accept. It is my settled conviction, repeatedly declared in public, that the Mussulmans of India, whilst claiming a full recognition of their legitimate interests and due consideration of their feelings and susceptibilities, should cultivate a sense of proportion and work in harmony and a true spirit of accord with each other and the Government.

So long as I am connected with this League I will submit to no outside dictation nor allow it to adopt any programme without the fullest consideration of its consequences to our community.

I reserve the right to publish our correspondence.

X

REPLY FROM WAZIR HASAN TO AMEER ALI

29 October 1913

I received your letter of the 27th October yesterday morning, and the very fact that I am writing to you more than 24 hours after its receipt would, I hope, be a sufficient indication that I have carefully read it over and over again, and also re-read the previous correspondence that has passed between ourselves, before replying to you to-day. I may add that I trust this fact will also indicate that I am not writing this reply in any mood other than one which befits so serious an occasion.

Before I deal with any other part of your letter, let me express my extreme astonishment and distress at your remark that you note in my letter 'slightly veiled insinuations as to 'selling our community'. I hope you will do me the favour of reading my letter over again, for I am sure you will find threin that my observations with regard to this matter refer entirely to people 'out in India', who, like me and my friend Mr. Mahomed Ali, 'have to contend every day with difficulties of a nature of which one who has been away from the country for so long can have little conception'. Is it not clear from the antithesis drawn between people out in India and people who have been away from the country for so long as yourself that, in saying 'we have only two alternatives, the alternative of the weak man to go under and sell our community as so many others have done before us' etc., I refer only to our own position and to the position of those of us who have to work in India and could have had no thought of you in my mind at the time of making this observation ?

This is the only 'innuendo' to which you refer in your letter, and as I maintain it is due entirely to a misconception on your part that you regard it as such, I do not see wherein I have insulted you or offended you. May I say how remote from my mind has always been the idea of insulting or offending you, and I trust you will accept this as a sufficient explanation, and withdraw your resignation which I have just learned you have tendered on account of the correspondence that has passed between ourselves. I shall certainly consider so serious a step on your part as a great misfortune, and my distress will be all the greater if such an action was due in any measure to what I had said or written to you.

With reference to the first paragraph of your letter I should like to request you to point out to me where in my letter I say that unless you join with the Aga Khan in giving me and Mr. Mohamed Ali a public dinner I would hold you up 'to the members of the League as being unwilling to assist the community even when you have to risk nothing and sacrifice nothing'. In a matter of this character I expected that you would have given the full context to explain the meaning of the words quoted by you from my letter. Had you done so it would have been clear that this observation of mine referred in very general terms to 'an opportunity for explaining the real attitude of the Mussulmans towards Government', and I maintain that if such an opportunity is denied to us, the accredited agents of the whole community it will be my painful duty in the last resort 'to tell the members of the League on my return to India that if things go wrong in India it is no use trusting anybody here to do us justice, and in fact, I do not see how I can get out of a clear explanation to the members of the League that the President of their own London branch is unwilling to assist the community even when he has to risk nothing and sacrifice nothing'. This is what I wrote to you and it is on this that I insist on being judged. The way in which you put the matter shows clearly—and I presume you meant to convey that idea—that because you would not give me a complimentary dinner I had threatened you with an intrigue against you in India. I have no desire to express my own views about such a suggestion; but I do not think I was wrong in hoping that one like yourself who resents as innuendoes things which have no reference whatever to you would have been a little more considerate of the feelings of others also.

I fear this dinner is likely to loom very large in this connection, and I owe it to myself and to Mr. Mohamed Ali to recapitulate the facts of the case. As you are aware, our original idea was to give a dinner to His Highness the Aga Khan, and we suggested it to him. His Highness, however, did not agree with this proposal, and at first suggested a dinner to be given by yourself, His Highness, Mr. Mohamed Ali, and myself, to persons of influence here, and a request we communicated his suggestion to you. To this you cordially agreed, though you impressed upon us the desirability of taking every precaution against giving to this dinner the least idea of a triumphant banquet given to celebrate the 'victory' in the Cawnpore affair.' As such an idea had

never occurred to us ourselves, we entirely agreed with you, and your views were communicated to H.H the Aga Khan.

His Higeness. however, thought over the matter again and he informed us that, in the first place, four hosts for a single dinner would be too many, and, in the next place, that in his original proposal some exeuse for a dinner was lacking. His Highness, therefore, altered his original proposal, to one according to which the dinner was to be given by yourself, and His Highness, and the people whom we all wished to interest in the cause of Mussulmans in India and abroad were to be invited to meet us. There is nothing in this proposal to suggest that it was to be 'a complimentary dinner' given to us, any more than its being a triumphal banquet to celebrate the Cawnpore 'victory', and any suggestion that, because you would not honour us in this manner I would intrigue against you, is on the face of it highly unjust to me and naturally resented very greatly.

As regards the subsequent history of this affair I should like to point out to you that, in the first place, you were not unwilling to join a public dinner at which, as you knew, political speeches were to be made so long as the dinner was to be given by all the four of us, namely, yourself, H.H. the Aga Khan, Mr. Mohamed Ali and myself; that, in the next place your only objection to a dinner to be given by yourself and H.H. the Aga Khan according to His Highness second proposal was that it would have the appearance of crowing over the Cawnpore 'victory', that, finally, you agreed to even this proposal, and actually asked the Lord Chancellor for his sanction. Now that you cannot join His Highenss in such a dinner as a host, it is just as well to remember that this is solely because the Lord Chancellor thinks it would be wiser if you did not join a public dinner. In your last letter you made it quite clear that you were ready 'to participate in a non-political complimentary dinner', and I cannot see how in the light of the facts in connection with the several proposals about the dinner, and your readiness to participate in a complimentary dinner to myself and Mr. Mohamed Ali, I could be accused of threatening you with the All-India Moslem League's displeasure because you would not join the Aga Khan in giving us a public dinner. Either you did wish to compliment us in this manner or you did not; and I must confess I fail to see how we could at all threaten you for not honouring us when in fact you were ready, as you say, all the time to do so.

I would request you to note that no objections were ever raised by you to a public political dinner at which all the four of us were to be hosts, nor does your position as a Privy Councillor and a member of its Judicial Committee appear to you to be incompatible with being the President of an admittedly political public body, although it seems to be incompatible with your being host at a political public dinner.

To my mind the dinner has now become a comparatively insignificant matter, and it is one on which for obvious reasons I do not wish to dilate. You have, however, introduced in your letter a matter of principle which is

of the most far reaching importance, namely, the relationshisp of the All-India Moslem League--which I find you refer to on one occasion as the Lucknow League—and the London Moslem League. This is a subject which is happily wholly independent of our respective personalities, and I hope you will forgive me if I address you on the subject with some emphasis. I also hope you will not regard anything that I say as a reflection on yourself; nor I hope, will you consider anything that I may say about the work of the League in India as having any reference to myself, for I have no desire of self-laudation.

Now, I maintain that the policy of the Moslem League must be laid down in India and no where else, although naturally, and rightly, it must be laid down in consultation with the London branch whenever it is possible for us to avail ourselves in time of its assistance and advice. It is only in this manner that any work can possibly be done, and I cannot see how else a practicable programme and procedure of work can be arranged. This is very different from my dictating a policy to you and I need hardly assure you that such an idea never crossed my mind.

As regards the subvention from the All-India Moslem League to the London branch, I do not see what objection you have, or can have, to my pointing out the very obvious fact that it would be, as you say, 'in proportion to the support the latter gives to the work and projects of the Central League.' This is a matter of principle, and as such, I believe, absolutely incontestible. What is more, it is a matter of fact and has to be accepted. Whether the London League, has, as you say, 'cordially supported all projects which in its considered judgment it deemed to be for the benefit of our people', is a matter on which it would be idle for me to express an opinion. But it may be that the 'considered judgment' of the London League may differ from 'considered judgment' of the All-India Moslem League, and I presume that in matters in which your League has not yet supported the All-India League its 'considered judgment' did differ from that of the All-India League. Here is therefore, an opportunity which you should welcome of a discussion between two responsible representatives of the All-India League and the London League, and I have every hope that such a discussion would result in mutual satisfaction, and that the interests of our community will there-by be promoted. However, as I have said before, everything is subject to the guiding principle that in the last resort the opinion of the All-India Moslem League must prevail, and its policy must be laid down in conformity with the wishes of the entire community, and in India and not according to the wishes of any individual, not even of the most eminent among us, in this country.

Before I conclude this letter, let me appeal to you once more to consider your decision about resigning the high office which you hold and which needs your services and your great talents. I have already expressed my opinion about this matter, and if I repeat it here it is because I wish that whatever is done by you is done deliberately and on a correct understanding of

what I wished to convey in my letters, and not prompted by momentary resentment based on a total misunderstanding of my meaning.

I note that you 'reserve the right to publish our correspondence'. I also find that some portion of it has already been circulated by you among members of the Central Committee of your League. I have no fear of this for myself nor object to it, but I should have thought that you would not decide upon such a step so hurriedly when the correspondence does not concern only ourselves but relates to the proposals of H.H. the Aga Khan also which were conveyed to you through us, and in some cases at your own request. I may suggest your consulting H.H. in this matter, though perhaps you will say I have no right to offer you any suggestion, and may even resent it in your present frame of mind.

17

LETTER FROM MOHAMMED ALI TO H. H. THE AGA KHAN

31 October 1913

'Times' published to-day article with vile insinuations against us which demand disclosure of everything. It states Your Highness has authorised it to announce that you will retire from headship of League in India on return to India and to describe retirement as irrevocable. This you never disclosed to us yesterday, in fact it contradicts what you told us. Please authorise us to contradict this immediately.

We feel in bare justice to ourselves fullest details of your recent conversations with us in London and Paris should immediately be published. We shall only wait till to-night.

AGA KHAN REPLIES TELEGRAPHICALLY

'My decision resign presidentship League irrevocable two years ago I wished it. Again last year, Taj Mahal distinctly told you and Raja Sahib. My reasons numerous, but first and chief reason which when League formed one leader, one president was useful, now that the League has become popular, one president impossible. Besides unfair to shut me up in box of president, which as you all know I always interpreted like a judge rather than advocate. I told you a hundred times that it was necessary that under actual conditions national work could be carried out on lines of general popular opinion rather (than ?) early and semi-dictatorial lines already impossible. Yesterday and also (at ?) meeting distinctly told you to realize essential change

now necessary. I also must have liberty to plead my ideas from free platform not from chair, which should be changed every year. I remain active member League, will give my subscriptions, but cannot accept chair's responsibility. Permanent president impossible. You are free to publish any conversation of mine if it pleases you. My advice is not to mind me, for as you know my conscience is clear to God and to man. I take this opportunity of clearing out and leaving League to be reformed on only lines possible under actual conditions. But I still will be as active a member as ever God made you all.

18

LETTER FROM THE AGA KHAN TO SYED WAZIR HASAN

3 November 1913

I write you this letter to place in your hands as the Honorary Secretary of the All-India Moslem League my resignation (which allow me to assure you is definite and irrevocable) of the honour of being the President of the League. Kindly communicate it to the Council and to the members in India.

It is my duty to tell you frankly most of the reasons that have decided me to take this step. I will begin by mentioning some of the minor and personal ones.

I am so circumstanced that I am compelled to be out of India for considerable periods every year (next year, for instance I have to spend six months in Africa and the year after I am compelled to go to South America for at least six months) and I have to be very often in Europe where I have considerable private interests, and where I am interested in some corporations. Thus, I cannot carry out the duties of president in the way I should like. In addition to this, I have other minor personal reasons of a purely domestic and family nature that make me consider it more advisable that I should retire from the presidency. However, all these personal reasons together would not have made me retire from the presidentship, if I thought that my continuance would serve the welfare of the community. But I have come to the conclusion, for reasons which I will now give you, that it is essential for our communal welfare that I should retire from the presidentship.

Both you and Mr. Mohamed Ali are well aware that I have had many personal reasons for wishing to take this course for some time past and I cannot further delay taking this step. But I do not propose to sever my connection with the League, far from it, I indeed will continue to give my

usual subscription and I am anxious to belong to its Council as an active member, and once I am relieved from the chair of president, I hope to attend every year the annual meeting. I sincerely believe that as an active member of the Council, free from the necessary 'judicial' character that attaches to the presidency, I can more effectively contribute my share to the service of the community.

In order to explain this clearly, I will have to go back to the history of the foundation of the League in India. When in the spring of 1906 I was at Aligarh, foreseeing the coming political movement in India, I suggested to the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk the formation of a Federation or League in order to give our people a political platform and also to prevent their disappearance as a national entity and unity. In fact, I was anxious that the Mussulmans in the India of the future should be a 'Kaum' or 'Millet' and not a mass of scattered units without political and social cohesion. He immediately agreed and the months that led to the formation of the deputation to the Viceroy he was occupied in preparing the ground. At that time, the Mussulman community in India owing to long neglect of all organized interest in politics had unfortunately fallen into a state of absolute chaos and political non-existence. In these early stages, the foundation of a League with a large number of office bearers from the aristocracy and men of strong social and financial position was absolutely necessary in order to give the organisation its weight and its status in the eyes of our Government and the Hindu community. The post of permanent president was necessary so that our organization in India might not die stillborn by too early struggles between different schools of thought in our community. Then came the long and memorable struggle to win the principle of separate representation on Councils, Imperial and Provincial. I, for one, never looked upon the principle of separate representation as a national policy, but as a necessity for awakening our people to the importance of political life and organization, in fact, partly to be an encouragement, but mainly to give them a platform and a sense of self-reliance. For me, separate representation in the Imperial and Provincial Councils was the only way for awakening our people from the state of coma into which they had fallen. I must say that in this early stage the League in India had as much need of high-sounding names for its office bearers as a newly formed company in the City has need of high-sounding titles on its board of directors.

Now, however, the League has reached the stage when it must depend for its prestige on the results of the services it renders to the community and on the popular backing and support that it receives rather than on the position or wealth of its chief supporters. Happily the League has passed through its infancy. Thank God, I have lived and seen the beloved 'infant' reach the state of early manhood. I am profoundly convinced that in India a permanent president, an official spokesman and a recognized leader at this stage will hamper the natural evolution and development of our community, even if he

be always on the spot and fully worth of such a position. In future, the League in India must become more and more not a political party but a national organization of the loyal and devoted Moslem community in India, the organization in which all parties must be represented and all schools of thought given due voice. In future, the League cannot have a leader but leaders of parties representing different schools of thought, and each trying to convince the community that its policy is the best for India. I do not wish to give these parties question begging names by calling them conservative or liberal, moderate or extremist, re-actionary or progressive, for I consider all these names ill-suited as descriptions of parties that will have to deal with the practical problems of contemporary India.

I will give you two instances of questions on which there must be differences and discussions and I could early give you twenty similar examples and leave you to draw your own conclusions as to the probable lines of division of opinion in India. In these discussions and differences I, for one, mean to take part, free from the judicial character that attaches to the president, and, God willing, I may be the leader of those who agree with me from conviction.

One of the two instances is the question of separate representation on municipalities and local boards. There must necessarily be two or even three ways of dealing with this question and there must be two or three parties to a discussion that will ultimately settle our policy. The other example is the problem that must arise with regard to primary education and its relation to the local vernaculars and the Urdu language. As these questions arise, there must be differences and discussions before a settlement can be reached and I, for one, heartily welcome the fact that our organization in India can now be, thanks to the awakening of our people, freed from the trammels of my presidentship. The future of our community in India and of the League depends on the peoples. This is a truism, but the time has come for our people to realise the truism and its responsibilities. They cannot leave the responsibilities to their officers and yet expect results that come only to active, patient and patriotic peoples. I am convinced that my retirement will help to develop this sense of responsibility and also that my varied experiences will be of greater service on the free bench of the League's Council than in the cramped chair of the President.

Nearly two years ago, for these very reasons, I tendered my resignation. Unfortunately, just before that time there had been a difference of opinion between me and large numbers in India on the question of the second partition of Bengal and the Durbar changes. The motive of my resignation was misunderstood and the community imagined that I was hurt at the criticisms passed on me and very graciously refused to accept my resignation, which was simply and solely for the reasons I have now told you and from a sense of duty. Then came the Turkish war and all its anxieties and sorrows. I could not go at such a time of pain and distress, and our community's efforts

had to be devoted to the single purpose of relieving the distress of the poor Moslems of the Balkans.

But now the time has come when the community must wake up and reorganize the League on a popular and sound basis, or it will degenerate into a self-appointed society of leaders without a following. If I continue any longer, in the chair of the president, I shall not be doing my duty and my conscience compels me to take this step. If you or any other office bearer of the League wishes to consult me on any matter, whether privately or publicly, my advice is at your disposal.

With this explanation, I place in your hands my resignation.

19

LETTER FROM SYED WAZIR HASAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'TIMES'

3 November 1913

With reference to the article about the All-India Moslem League and the 'resignation of leaders' which appeared in your issue of the 31st October, I crave the courtesy of your publishing the following explanation which I trust will place your readers in a better position to judge the situation than what has already appeared in the *Times*. I may add that I have already placed in your hands the reply which I had sent on the 29th October to Mr. Ameer Ali's letter of the 27th, and although you have not yet published, it, I hope you will do so at an early date in fairness to Mr. Mohamed Ali and myself. I have also placed in your hands the telegram addressed by His Highness the Aga Khan to Mr. Mohammed Ali in connection with the true significance of his well-known desire for some years past to relinquish the position of President of the All-India Moslem League, and the League's reconstruction on more popular lines. This telegram too has not been published in the *Times*, but I trust it will also appear in an early issue.

As the *Times* article as well as Mr. Ameer Ali's last letter deals with some important matters of principle, the discussions of which should not, I feel, be clouded by the intrusion of any personalities, I think I should first state as briefly as I can the true facts in connection with the project of a dinner to be given to Mr. Mohamed Ali and myself, and thus clear the way for the consideration of matters of far greater importance. You say that 'to suggestions that a public dinner should be given in their honour by the Aga Khan and himself, Mr. Ameer Ali demurred, whereupon they (meaning Mr. Mohamed Ali and myself) proceeded to Paris to discuss the matter with the

Aga Khan'. It is not clear from this passage from whom the suggestion emanated, though it is made to appear that the dinner was to be a complimentary dinner given in our honour, and that Mr. Ameer Ali demurred to such a suggestion, whereupon we proceeded, of our own accord, to Paris to discuss the matter with the Aga Khan. Now, in the first place, the suggestion of a dinner to be given to us emanated from His Highness the Aga Khan who communicated it to Mr. Ameer Ali through us, and I need hardly say that it was not suggested in any way either by Mohamed Ali or myself. In the second place, the dinner was never intended to be a complimentary dinner, but, as His Highness the Aga Khan wrote to Mr. Ameer Ali, it was only meant to provide an opportunity for 'counteracting the false charges of the *Times* correspondent', about the growing disloyalty of a section of Indian Mussulmans. Mr. Ameer Ali has this letter in his possession, and in fairness to ourselves he should have published this in its entirety. We now ask him to publish it along with his own letter to the Aga Khan, for I have myself had this letter read out to me by His Highness, and I know that its publication would clear up a much-befogged situation. But it is somewhat fortunate that the purpose of the dinner is made clear in a letter of Mr. Ameer Ali himself, dated 25th October, and addressed to me, from which I have reproduced this textual quotation from the Aga Khan's letter. In the third place, Mr. Ameer Ali demurred only to a dinner in which he and the Aga Khan were to be the only hosts while we were to be merely guests who were to be introduced in this way to other guests. He had, however, agreed that very morning to the original proposal of His Highness the Aga Khan, namely Mr. Ameer Ali, His Highness himself, Mr. Mohamed Ali and myself should all be the hosts at a public dinner to which influential public men should be invited, and at which we should all explain the real attitude of the Mussulmans of India towards the Government, which was essentially loyal, and thus counter-act, in the words of His Highness the Aga Khan, 'the false charges of the *Times* correspondent'. In the next place, it was Mr. Ameer Ali himself who asked us to go to Paris. Finally, it must be remembered that on our return from Paris and after he had received from me the letter in which Mr. Ameer Ali now says I had insulted him, Mr. Ameer Ali agreed even to the second proposal of the Aga Khan that he and the Aga Khan should be the hosts and we among the guests, and he went so far as to apply to the Lord Chancellor for his sanction. Now that he cannot be the joint host with the Aga Khan at such a dinner, it is only because on the 27th October the Lord Chancellor informed him that 'he thinks that it would be wise not to attend the public dinner' to which he had referred.

From Mr. Ameer Ali's letter of the 27th October which you have published, it appears that because he would not give us a complimentary dinner we threatened him with an intrigue against him in India. But Mr. Ameer Ali does not seem to remember that in the same letter he says he was ready 'to participate in a non-political complimentory dinner'. Either he did wish to compliment us in this manner or he did not: and I must

confess I fail to see how I could at all threaten him for not honouring us when in fact he was ready, as he says, all the time to do so. There was, however, never any talk of a complimentary dinner to be given to ourselves any more than of a triumphal banquet, as Mr. Ameer Ali seemed to dread, to exult over the Cawnpore settlement.

I do not know whether Mr. Ameer Ali placed in your hands the *whole* of my letter of the 24th October or only carefully selected passages. But in any case I submit that considerable injustice has been done to M . Mohamed Ali and myself in mutilating my letter, and the sense is entirely changed. There is sometimes far more mischief in asterisks and dots than in the worst invective, and in this instance it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that the mischief was deliberately meant. Would your readers have formed the same idea of ourselves and our inordinate appetite for 'recognition' and a public dinner if the dots in the *Times* quotation from my letter had not been substituted for the following words :

'A little regard for our own dignity compels me to say that we do not desire any personal appreciation of our labours, and if this dinner was to come off at the end of our stay here, there might have been some suspicion that it was meant to crown our work with generous appreciation from two such eminent Mussulmans as yourself and the Aga Khan. As it is, it is really an introduction of us to the influential men in England'.

Throughout, the object of the projected dinner was, as both His Highness the Aga Khan and I had repeatedly tried to make clear to Mr. Ameer Ali, to get an opportunity for explaining the real attitude of the Mussulmans towards the Government and to counteract 'the false charges of the *Times* correspondent', and if Mr. Ameer Ali for some unexplained reasons, which, however, are not entirely unknown to us, denied us such an opportunity, I would have been entirely within my rights in telling the members of the League on my return to India that, 'if things go wrong in India it is no use trusting anybody here to do us justice', and in informing Mr. Ameer Ali in advance that 'I do not see how can get out of a clear explanation to the members of the League that the President of our own London branch is unwilling to assist the community even when he has to risk nothing and sacrifice nothing'.

While on this subject I may add that I am at a loss to understand the position of Mr. Ameer Ali. As . Privy Councillor, and a prospective Peer, it is wise for him not to attend a public dinner of this character, but his position does not appear to him, or to anybody else—to be incompatible with the presidentship of an admittedly political body such as the London Branch of the Moslem League. For the presid t of such an organisation to demur to participation in a public dinner given with the object of emphasising Moslem loyalty and repudiating the absurd ideas and demands sometimes attributed to Indian Mussulmans is, to say the least of it, wholly inconsistent. Indeed, the position is anomalous and contradictory.

A word now about my 'slightly veiled insinuations' as to 'selling our community' which Mr. Ameer Ali regards as 'contemptible' and unworthy of 'the Secretary of an Association of respectable and responsible Mussulmans in India'. In my letter of the 29th October which you have not yet published, and to which Mr. Ameer Ali does not so much as refer, although it was read out in his presence at a meeting of the Committee of the London League when his resignation was being discussed, I have already said that 'my observations with regard to this matter refer entirely to people 'out in India' who, like me and my friend Mr. Mohamed Ali, 'have to contend every day with difficulties of a nature of which one who has been away from the country for so long can have little conception'. 'Is it not clear', I had asked in that letter, 'from the antithesis drawn between people out in India who have been away from the country for so long as yourself that in saying 'we have only two alternatives, the alternative of the weak man to go under and sell our community as so many others have done before us,' etc., I refer only to our own position and to the position of those of us who have to work in India, and could have had no thought of you in my mind at the time of making this observation'? I had also added how remote from my mind had always been the idea of insulting or offending Mr. Ameer Ali, and that I trusted he would accept this as a sufficient explanation and withdraw his resignation of which I had heard only from an indirect source. I wrote to him, and I am still of that opinion, that 'I shall certainly consider so serious a step on your part as a great misfortune, and my distress will be all the greater if such an action was due in any measure to what I had said or written to you.'

Now that Mr. Ameer Ali, while availing himself fully of every expression of opinion that he should not resign, has not only confirmed his resignation, but has also given to it such extraordinary publicity, may I point out that Mr. Ameer Ali did not seem to discover in my letter any insult or insinuation, veiled or otherwise, on the day on which he received it, nor when he wrote to me on two occasions on the following day, and that it was after an interval of three whole days that he made the extraordinary discovery that I accused him of selling our community. That is not all. Indeed, on the day following the receipt of my letter to which he now takes such serious objection, he wrote to me that he was quite willing to join the Aga Khan in a non-political complimentary dinner to Mr. Mohamed Ali and myself, and because he considered the gathering a political function he went so far as to write to the Lord Chancellor for sanction to his being a joint host with the Aga Khan. The repeated desire of participating in a complimentary dinner and all this trouble undertaken for the sake of giving us an opportunity of vindicating our political views do not seem to indicate any very deep resentment at the slightly veiled and contemptible insinuations of Mr. Ameer Ali's selling the community, which he found on the 27th October all of a sudden to be unworthy of the Secretary to an Association of respectable and responsible Mussulmans in India. Whether they indicate extraordinary forbearance which

it took three whole days to wear out, or something else which it took three days to perfect, I leave your readers to judge. I shall, however, appeal to them to beware of the dangers of becoming a mere cat's-paw in controversies prompted by our personal ambitions. This is a danger to which the British Government and the British public are very prone to fall a prey, and in such controversies people successfully enlist the sympathies of otherwise disinterested officials and public men on their side by accusing those whom they dislike of sedition against Government and hatred of the ruling race.

Mr. Ameer Ali's last letter has introduced into this unfortunate episode a matter of principle which is of the most far-reaching importance, namely the relationship of the All-India Moslem League—which on some occasions he and you call the 'Lucknow League'—and the London Moslem League. This is a subject which is happily wholly independent of our respective personalities, and I can dwell on it with some emphasis without the fear of being accused of reflecting on Mr. Ameer Ali or praising my own work in the League of which I have the honour to be the chief executive officer. I maintain that the policy of the Moslem League must be laid down in India and nowhere else, although naturally, and rightly, it must be laid down in consultation with the London Branch whenever it is possible for us to avail ourselves in time of its assitance and advice. It is only in this manner that any work can possibly be down and I cannot see how else a practicable programme and procedure can be arranged. This is very different from my dictating to the president of the London League, and I need hardly say that such an idea never crossed my mind.

I may mention that the whole controversy has arisen not out of anything that I proposed to Mr. Ameer Ali, but, on the contrary, out of a letter which Mr. Ameer Ali sent to me on the 22nd October asking for an increased subvention from my League to the London Branch, and adequate guarantees that such support will be regularly and punctually forthcoming. In that letter Mr. Ameer Ali wrote to me : 'I hope that before you leave England you will be good enough to inform us of the views of your Council, whether they wish to contribute properly to the maintenance of this Leauge which is doing the Imperial part of their work'. With reference to this, I do not see what objection he has, or can have, to my pointing out, in response to his own invitation, the very obvious fact that the All-India Moslem League's subvention to the London Branch would be in proportion to the support the latter gives to the work and projects of the parent League. This is a matter of principle and as such, I believe, absolutely incontestable. What is more, it is a matter of fact and has to be accepted. I can well understand that between people so differently circumstanced as Mr. Ameer Ali in England, with all the responsibilities and limitations of his position as a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Councils, and ourselves, working in India in daily contact with the realities of the situation, differences of opinion may arise which would correspond to differences of outlook. If such existed at present

there was an opportunity, which Mr. Ameer Ali should have welcomed, of a discussion between two responsible representatives of the parent League and its London Branch, and I had every hope that such a discussion would result in mutual satisfaction and the promotion of the best interests of our community. Of that opportunity Mr. Ameer Ali did not choose to avail himself. Be that as it may, I maintain that everything is subject to the guiding principle that in the last resort the opinion of the All-India Moslem League must prevail, and its policy must be laid down in India and in conformity with the wishes of the entire community and not of any individual in this country, no matter how eminent. An unconditional subvention is too preposterous to consider, and co-ordination can only be a euphemism for giving every legitimate consideration to the personal equation in the matter, which we are always prepared to do. Otherwise, does it stand to reason that Indian Mussulmans should tolerate a system which must contemplate the possibility of a conflict of opinion between a few permanent residents and a larger number of Indian Mahommedan students who reside here only for three or four years each, on the one side, and the seventy millions of Mussulmans on the other side, who have to live and work and suffer and prosper in India. I need only add that I am not speaking without authority, and that authority is the constitution of the League of which I am the Secretary, and which has not failed to specify the relationship of the Central League and its provincial, district and London Branches.

So far as our personalities were concerned, I had offered in my last letter what a member of the Committee of the London League called at its meeting a very full explanation, and I have reason to believe that the Committee was satisfied with that explanation. As regards the relationship of the two Leagues and the subvention from the one to the other, His Highness the Aga Khan and the entire Committee unanimously requested Mr. Ameer Ali to leave it to be settled by the two Leagues. I was, and still am, prepared to accept this, and I need hardly say that I shall abide by the decision of my League and shall discharge all the duties laid down by and incidental to the enforcing of its rules as I am required by its Constitution to do, and am doing at present. But Mr. Ameer Ali did not accept this very reasonable suggestion, and I cannot consider myself in any way responsible for his adherence to his resolve to resign.

I cannot, however, see what his resignation and, if I may say so, the 'sympathetic strike' of the Vice-President and the Treasurer, have to do with the well-known desire of His Highness the Aga Khan to resign the Presidentship of the All-India Moslem League. His Highness tendered his resignation two years ago, when there was not the least suspicion of Mr. Ameer Ali's resigning the office he holds here. Again, last year he discussed this matter with Mr. Mohamed Ali and the Hon. the Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad. I had the privilege of a long and frank conversation with His Highness on the 30th October just before he left London, and he never suggested anything about

resigning himself because of Mr. Ameer Ali's resignation, nor did he commit himself to any view about the relationship of the two Leagues, and, in fact, we have never been under the impression that he regards the League here as anything but a branch of the League of which he himself is the President. I have, therefore, no reason for believing that he has authorised anybody to indicate that he regards the London League as a co-ordinate body with the All-India League. As regards his desire to resign the office that he holds in India, it is prompted by considerations which are just the reverse of those that have led to the resignation of Mr. Ameer Ali. In reply to a telegram which we addressed to him to Paris immediately on reading the *Times* article on the 31 October, he wired back that while his reasons for this decision were numerous the first and chief reason was that under the present circumstances he considered a permanent president impossible, and in view of the fact that the League had now become more popular, national work should be carried on lines of general popular opinion rather than on semi-dictatorial lines of the League's early days which are already impossible. He desires us to realise that this essential change is now necessary, and he suggests that the League should have a new chairman every year, which is, I may add, the practice of the Indian National Congress. Whatever we may think of the desire of His Highness to resign the office which he still holds, we cannot refrain from admiring the frankness and boldness with which he is always anxious to face facts, and to state them, and the democratic spirit which gives to him the truest conservatism—the conservatism 'that lops the mouldered branch away'. He thinks more of the general good of his community than of his own position or power, and he, at any rate, can have no sympathy with a semi-dictatorial attitude that is very much out of date at the present time.

This letter is already very long and I do not propose to make it longer by justifying the attitude of the Mussulmans of India to-day or vindicating our own political views. But in view of your repeated attacks levelled at the men who lead the community at the present day and your references to ourselves and the mission on which we have come to England, I trust you will permit me to say in very general terms that our views about the right policy of the British Government in relation to Moslem States are the same as those of the Right Honourable Mr. Ameer Ali, and that our views about the future development of India and the relations of Indian Mussulmans with other communities and with the Government are the same as those of His Highness the Aga Khan. We regard the British connection with India as a dispensation of Providence, and shall, to the best of our power, assist our community in making the fullest use of the facilities for self-improvement which British rule in India provides by means of the peace that it has secured to us and the introduction of new factors in our development, both of which are to a great extent lacking in other countries largely inhabited by our co-religionists. These views we have repeatedly expressed in India as well as during our short stay in this country and by these we abide. We, however, reserve to ourselves the right to

criticise the actions of individual officers of Government, and certain measures and policies of the Government, which we consider injurious to the best interests of our country and our community and no less injurious to the best interests of Great Britain herself. We do not, however, desire to discuss these publicly before bringing them to the notice of the authorities responsible to His Majesty, and to the British Parliament, and, in the last resort to the British public, for the good government of our country. For this very reason we have hitherto refrained from public agitation, and we feel that in the first instance our concern is with the Secretary of State for India and those who assist him in his work at the India Office.

This, Sir, is I feel a sufficient, though necessarily in unfortunately somewhat long explanation of our position and attitude, and I trust you will in fairness to ourselves find a place for it in an early issue of the *Times*. We fully subscribe to the observations made in its address by the famous Simla Deputation of October 1906 to Lord Minto, which you quote in your article, and it is just because we desire to prevent the feelings stirred up by recent events, specially among the younger generation of Mahommedans, from passing beyond the control of temperate counsel and sober guidance, that we have come to this country to explain to the authorities their real character and intensity. Had we wished to embarrass them we would have remained in India and followed the tactics of the revolutionaries with whose movement a contemporary of yours attributes to the All-India Moslem League a sympathy that never existed, that does not exist to-day and that will never, we hope, come to exist.

Source : The Comrade, 22 November 1913.

20

AMEER ALI'S CIRCULAR LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE ANJUMAN-I-ISLAM

I feel it incumbent upon me to address you in reference to the crisis which has arisen in the progress and well-being of our great community, the details of which have no doubt been made known to you through the medium of the newspapers. Deeply as we may regret communal dissensions reaching an acute stage and attracting public attention, we must face the fact that a crisis of this kind was bound to arise sooner or later, owing to the differences that have recently appeared among our people not merely on matters of detail, but on the basic principles connected with their development.

Considering the position in which the Mussulmans of India stand, it is clear that the constitutional line which has been so long pursued by the most thoughtful and helpful men of our community is the one best adapted to our requirements and welfare. Whilst claiming proper recognition of our legitimate interests and due consideration of our feelings, our policy should be that of working in a true spirit of accord with each other and with the Government, on the justice and good will of which we have hitherto relied, and must in the best interests of our people, continue to rely. It is obvious to any careful student of the history of British India that by the assiduous work and anxious thought of our leading men, the Moslem community has within the last twenty years or so been placed in a position of confidence and good will in a relation to the British Government. It is equally clear that any inconsiderate, precipitate or vehement action in which our men of standing should acquiese or even seem to assent by their silence would put back the cause of Mussulmans development for another generation.

The London League, has kept these guiding considerations in view, and its action has, therefore, been largely of an educative character. Located at the centre of the British Empire it has been in constant touch with, and has had considerable influence upon public opinion in this country. To retain any influence it must continue to occupy an independent and coordinate position in relation to the League in India; once its views and policy are subordinated to that of any other communal organization, it would be unable to pursue a steadfast and consistent policy, and the results would indeed be disastrous to the community. In this connexion I may be permitted to quote the estimate to the *Times* (October 31st, 1913) as to the work the London League has been able to accomplish on the lines hitherto pursued: 'Its relation and co-ordination; and, by the sober, well reasoned, and detailed representations it has made to the India Office, the Colonial Office and other Whitehall department, it has taken the acknowledged lead in fortuilating and giving expression to Indian Moslem opinion. Indeed, on such matters as the treatment of Indians in South Africa and the East Africa Protectorate, the claim of Indians to positions of the real responsibility in the commissioned ranks of the Army, and questions affecting the welfare of Indian students here it has spoken for sober educated Indian opinion generally'.

The attitude of dictation which certain members of the Indian League have adopted toward us would, if submitted to, have the result of destroying the influence for good the London League has hitherto exercised. I have, therefore, felt it my duty to tender my resignation of the Presidentship subject to the affairs of the League being wound up by the Treasurer, but it has been urged by influential friends in sympathy with our people that the direction of the League is a sacred trust reposed in me by the community in India and as Mr. Latif, the Vice-President, and Mr. Anik, the Treasurer, have also decided to leave with me, the Indian Moslem Leaders should have an opportunity to express an opinion into whose hands the direction of this responsible

organisation should pass.

It is not desirable that the London League should be left a derelict in inexperienced hands. I am, therefore, writing to ask you to be good enough, in view of the great importance of the matter, to communicate your opinion to me at the earliest opportunity, and if possible by return of mail, stating whether you consider that the London League should act in subordination to the Indian League or be maintained on the co-ordinate lines hitherto pursued? If you favour subordination I would beg you to suggest some one to whom Presidency could be made over, for I would not myself retain it under conditions so destructive of its real use and influence.

Source : The Comrade, 6 December 1913.

21

LETEER FROM SAMI ULLAH BEG TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'PIONEER' ON THE MUSLIM LEAGUE CRISIS

8 November 1913

The events that have lately taken place in London force upon the mind of Mussulmans the question of the relations that ought to subsist between the two Leagues of London and India. Those who are acquainted with the history of the birth and growth of these Leagues can very well understand the reason of the obscurity that hung over this point up to the present time. They were formed simultaneously to meet the exigencies of the occasion and served their immediate purposes most successfully. Those emergencies have passed away and the time has arrived when they should set themselves to work with sustained effort in certain directions. Our All-India Muslim League did declare its policy but the London League never committed itself to anything definite in that direction. But is that the reason why Mr. Ameer Ali should not be left in absolute control of the League in London ? Is it necessary that he should see eye to eye with us in every matter ? We have no doubt that our goal is self-government within the British Empire, but that goal is so distant that it is invisible to us to-day. Our present work consists mainly of doing practical spade work and of preparing the ground in all directions. The improvement of public service, the increasing of facilities for Indians to co-operate in the Government of their own country, the mass education, the industrial development of the country, the status of Indians in this world are only a few of the important questions which ought to engage our attention. There is no fear of serious disagreement on these points. We ought to be

practical men. We have to balance the advantages of keeping Mr. Ameer Ali against the disadvantages of losing him. No political organisation in India is complete without some organisation in England also to echo our sentiment there and no organisation in England is worth having without a man of character, of position and of influence at its head whose words may carry weight. I have heard Sir William Wedderburn say that the Mussulmans succeeded in carrying their points in connection with the Reform Scheme simply because some men of influence and position belonging to their community were on the spot who approached the proper authorities just at the nick of time and turned the scale in their favour by the force of their able representations and marked personalities. Mr. Ameer Ali is an asset to the community which cannot be put aside so lightly. We cannot afford to lose him at this juncture under any circumstances. We must rely upon his old age and experience, upon the resourcefulness of his tact and ability of which he has given abundant proof, upon our own past experience of him, as sufficient safeguards against any misfortune and calamity that might result by the clashing of the two Leagues in their sphere of action. He has steered the community admirably during the most troublous times and we have no reason to apprehend that he will stumble in calmer moments. We should all request him to withdraw his resignation and he should be given absolute powers over the London League. Every Provincial League ought to pass a vote of confidence in him.

Source : The Pioneer, 12 November 1913.

22

LETTER FROM H.H. THE AGA KHAN TO SYED WAZIR HASAN

14 November 1913

You demanded from me in Paris that I should write out the bare history of the now notorious dinner, and I must do so from memory, for of course I did not keep any notes, and I never thought that the matter would ever become important.

Mr. Mohammed Ali and yourself were having a conversation with me, and I remember not which of you suggested giving a dinner party to me, and I think, but am not quite certain, Mr. Ameer Ali also, as the guests of the evening, though my memory is not quite certain as to Mr. Ameer Ali's name having been mentioned by either of you. I at once thought it was too absurd and too childish for Mr. Ameer Ali and myself who live in England a great deal

to accept hospitality from you two gentlemen who had only come for a short time, and that the thing would appear not only ridiculous to others, but that we could not possibly take such advantage of your hospitality. I then suggested that it would be a good thing all the same if a dinner was held and you two gentlemen had a chance of publicly declaring your undoubted loyalty to the Government, and of removing the absurd but none the less mischievous theory that has got abroad, that the growing class that you represent amongst the Mahommedans of India have sympathy or something in common with the extremists of the Tilak school or with the mad political Pan-Islamists, and that whatever difference existed between your school and what is called the old Aligarh party was as to the method of improving the community educationally, commercially and otherwise, rather than any question of loyalty and disloyalty; and as false charges had been brought against the community generally I thought it would be a good thing for Mr. Ameer Ali and myself as well as you two gentlemen to give a combined dinner party, and that then you should clearly explain the point of view and loyalty of the younger Moslems of India.

When next I saw you I told you that such a dinner party might appear rather a round-about way of doing it, and that it would be better perhaps if you two came simply as guests and spoke out what you had to say, and removed any possibility of misunderstanding about your point of view that might remain in England.

That is all that I can say about the dinner party. With the disastrous complications that arose I had nothing to do. I was not there on the spot, and even if I had been, in looking back I doubt very much if I could have done anything to avoid them.

You have demanded from me a history of the first steps with which I was directly connected, and I send it to you with pleasure, as in duty bound. May I once more repeat that the only object of the dinner was that you, who had just come from India, should publicly express what I sincerely believe to be the fact, the absolute loyalty of the vast majority, the overwhelming majority of the younger Moslem community in India.

Source : The Comrade, 6 December 1913.

23

LETTER FROM M. T. KADERBHOY TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'COMRADE'

8 November 1913

It would not be out of place, I believe, to ventilate my views on the subject of the present dispute between the leaders of the Mahommedan League in view of the fact that I was for some years connected with the London All-India Moslem League as its Honorary Secretary. I therefore trust you will be so good as to extend to me the hospitality of your columns.

In my opinion the dispute which has arisen between the London Branch of the Moslem League and the Central League is undoubtedly very undignified and prejudicial to the best interests of the Mahommedan community both in England and in India.

There is no gainsaying the fact that Mr. Ameer Ali is at the bottom of the mishief. Possessed of no qualities essential for the leadership of large and influencial community and carried away by ideas of self-importance, his ambition to dominate the League and to be the Dictator-General to the Moslem World, is simply preposterous. There are men in the community far abler than Mr. Ameer Ali to be the political leaders who would guide the destinies of the community in the proper channel, and though it is impossible not to concede to Mr. Ameer Ali the tribute of admiration for his literary culture, as a political Guru of the Mahommedans he is, what I may call a square man in the round hole. I have known Mr. Ameer Ali personally for many years and I have come into the closest contact with him, having been not only the Secretary of the London All-India League but even Mr. Ameer Ali's private and personal secretary. I am therefore in a position to gauge his merits as a man and as a leader much more accurately than most men could do, and I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that Mr. Ameer Ali is fit for anything but the leadership of the Mahommedan community.

Candour bits me say that it would be nothing less than a misfortune for the Indian Mahommedans if Mr. Ameer Ali is allowed to preside over the political destinies of the Mohammedans at any time in future. His narrow conservative views are altogether out of date and not at all consonant with the new spirit that has animated the Mahommedans of India.

The recent dissensions between the Secretary of the Central League and Mr. Ameer Ali were due entirely to the latter's failure to grasp the importance of the present political situation in India so far as it affects the Mahommedan community. The political dinner referred to in Mr. Wazir Hasan's letter to Mr. Ameer Ali was not the real cause of the dissensions because it is an incontrovertible fact that Mr. Ameer Ali himself had attended many political dinners. To quote only a few cases I beg to remind your readers of the

dinner that was given in honour of Sir William Wedderburn at the West Minster Palace Hotel at which Mr. Ameer Ali was present. Then again in a Luncheon given in honour of Mr. Ameer Ali by Mr. A. M. Jiwanji the former has responded to the toast. Both these functions were of a political character and important political speeches were made thereat touching the East African and other political problems affecting the interests of Hindus and Mahommedans alike.

The main reason of the present split in the Mahommedan League as far as my knowledge of the whole affair goes is nothing but personal jealousy on the part of Mr. Ameer Ali towards Mr. Wazir Hasan. As regards the connection between the Central League in India and its Branch in London, any man of commonsense would admit that the London League being only a Branch of the Central League should confirm to all the instructions from India. But as a matter of fact, Mr. Ameer Ali always acted in the most high handed and autocratic manner, imposing his own will upon all around him and trying to be Sir Oracle of the Moslem India in matters social as well as political. The chief reason of this attitude on the part of Mr. Ameer Ali was due to the fact that the London Branch was not financed wholly by the Central League, and this inability on the part of the latter is what is referred to by Mr. Wazir Hasan when he says in his letter that 'if the Central League has starved you it has been compelled no less to starve itself'. Practically the London League did not require any help from the Head Office in India as the former was liberally financed by H. H. the Aga Khan, the Honourable Nawab Bahadur Khuaja Sir Salim-Ullah, Nawab of Dacca, the Raja of Mahmudabad, Khan Bahadur Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhri, Mr. A. N. Jiwanji and others. In spite of the liberal help received from the gentlemen the London Branch made no scruple to obtain from the Central League in India an annual contribution of £ 50 which it really did not need. Considering these facts, I do not see any reason why the London League should look forward to any pecuniary help from the Central League, and it seems to me a preposterous claim of Mr. Ameer Ali that the London League should obtain from the Central League a sum of £ 1,800 a year. My own experience of the work of the London Branch tells me that the amount required by Mr. Ameer Ali is absurdly exhorbitant, unless it is intended by the gentleman to hold balls and such other social entertainments in London for the benefit of the Mahommedan community resident in London.

In conclusion I would like to observe that Mr. Ameer Ali's resignation of the London Branch of the League is not by any means a misfortune for the Indian Mahommedans. He was undoubtedly a bar to the progress of the Moslems in India in the field of politics. His extreme conservative views coupled with strong desire for self-advancement at the sacrifice of the interests of his community, block the way to the realization of those new political ambitions that have been stirring the hearts of the Mahommedans of India for the Unification of the Indian Empire by the Mahommedans and the

Hindus being brought closer together by the ties of common interests and common hopes, and aspirations for a place in the comity of nations.

Source : The Comrade, 15 November 1913.

24

THE TIMES ON THE RESIGNATION OF SYED AMEER ALI AND AGA KHAN FROM THE LONDON MUSLIM LEAGUE

'Both decisions are due to the same course of events, which has shown a rapidly increasing divergence of views between the older leaders of the Mahommedan community and an active school of educated but inexperienced politicians among their younger co-religionists. This rising generation has been giving vent for some time to a growing intolerance of the advice and influence of its elders, and matters have been brought to a head in the London branch of the League by the action of deputation of young Mahommedans which has come to England to secure support, with or without the help of its seniors, for an active propaganda against the present policy of the Indian Government.... Young men are ever-ready every where to regard their seniors as unprogressive and inert, and young Mahommedans are no exception to the rule.... The vaunted 'success' of agitation on the part of their Hindu compatriots is a natural incentive amongst young Mahommedans to tactics of the same kind.... What the young Mahommedans desire is, we presume, a closer association with and a more direct effect upon the machine of Indian Government so that in the process of administration there may be increasing opportunity for the play of Indian character and the influence of Indian mind. What they do not perceive is that their ambitions must remain largely premature untill their community has advanced very much farther along the road of self improvement and self-development. Meanwhile the methods they are adopting can only have disastrous results for Indian Mahommedans, whatever may be said for the ideals with which they profess to be inspired. What are the visible results of the activity of a number of young Mahommedans in India whose tendencies are certainly not endorsed by the bulk of their own people ? They have been purely destructive. They have for the time being almost destroyed the Moslem League, they have introduced dangerous divisions in a community hitherto united, and they have alienated the older leaders who enjoy the respect of the whole country. They have undone the work of years and have wrought grave injury to the cause of Islam in India.... The younger Mahommedans who have captured the Moslem League are turning a wise and well-directed movement into a political campaign of a kind which bodies no good either to

Mahommedans or to India. We deplore the case with which their ends are being attained, and believe the whole of the Indian Mahommedan community will have reason to deplore it also. The future of the Mahommedan movement in India is now clouded by doubts and uncertainties from which it has long been full. Hitherto it has inspired confidence but while the new influences remain at the top we fear it will produce mistrust.'

Source: The Times, 6 November 1913.

25

PRESS OPINION

THE 'MUSSULMAN'

We feel considerable diffidence in passing any opinion on the unfortunate quarrel between Mr. Ameer Ali on the one hand and Messrs. Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali on the other, without knowing the full details of all that happened. The proposed dinner to the latter, which the Right Hon'ble Mr. Ameer Ali showed his disinclination to join, might be the immediate cause, but it is obvious that there were other things behind it. We do not, however, quite understand why and how Mr. Ameer Ali showed his reluctance to attend the dinner on the ground that political speeches would be made there, though he had attended such dinners before, had written letters to newspapers, expressing his views or criticising Government on many burning political questions, and had himself been the President of an out and out political organisation like the London branch of the All-India Moslem League. The position now taken by him seems to us quite inconsistent. But at the same time it is more or less apparent that Mr. Wazir Hasan, who is now closely associated with Mr. Mohamed Ali, used, in his letter to Mr. Ameer Ali, words which ought not to have been used. Mr. Ameer Ali has rendered services to the community which, we hope we can assert without any fear of contradiction, no other Mussulman of the present day has been able to do; his-out-spokenness and independence have extorted the admiration even of his enemies. He holds a unique position in the Mahommedan community and it will, we hope, be universally admitted that the importance which is attached to the London League is due to the personality of Mr. Ameer Ali, its President. His representations to the British Government, not only concerning questions affecting the Indian Mahommedans but also in regard to Persia, Tripoli, Turkey, etc., have not altogether gone in vain; in short he is an asset of the Moslem community, which we cannot afford to lose. Such a man is entitled to polite

and courteous treatment even at the hands of those Mahommedans who happen to differ from him, but we are led to think he has not received such treatment from Messrs Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali, and it is hot words that have brought about the unfortunate catastrophe. We do not, however, characterise this as a split in the League camp, though it may be a difference between certain individuals. The only thing in which there seems to be any difference of opinion among the members of the League is the introduction in its creed of the aim of 'attainment of self-government, under the aegis of the British Crown, suitable to India,' but it is to be remembered that with the exception of Mr. Rafiuddin of Bombay and one or two others, all the members of the League, present at the last annual sessions at Lucknow, voted for it with zeal and enthusiasm. It is further to be borne in mind that the London Moslem League, of which Mr. Ameer Ali was the president, and His Highness the Aga Khan, the president of the Central League, had already approved of the new creed which was to be adopted at the annual sessions of the All-India Moslem League at Lucknow in March last. So as there is not difference of opinion on this question between Mr. Ameer Ali and the Aga Khan on the one hand and Mr. Wazir Hasan on the other, there is no other man who can take his place and we, in common with the bulk of the Indian Mussulmans, hope that Mr. Ameer Ali will reconsider the matter and withdraw his resignation at an early date.

THE 'TRIBUNE'

Like the Surat split of the Indian National Congress the Moslem League is now face to face with a crisis. But unlike the Congress the Legague has only to contend against a few individuals of position and influence. We cannot say what following Mr. Ameer Ali has in this country, but we feel pretty certain that it cannot be as large as that of Mr. Wazir Hasan. Indeed, not a few of the progressive party have felt that Mr. Ameer Ali is actually hampering the advancement of the community by his antiquated and overcautious methods. This view of the internal working of the Moslem League was visible even in the negotiation of January 1911 with the Congress : and it was then an open secret that His Highness the Aga Khan would have given a workable basis satisfactory to all had it not been for certain adverse influences at work. However, Mr. Ali's resignation is to be deplored to the extent that he does not see his way to remain with the popular party to exercise a restraining influence in them. We admit that democracy is liable to err, but that is no reason why the progress of 70 million Mahommedans should be retarded by a rigid adherence to inflexible oligarchic principles. If Mr. Ameer Ali has reason to think that Messrs Mohamed Ali, Wazir Hasan and others who think with them are moving too fast, it is his duty to mix with them and exercise a restraining influence in them. He does not certainly improve the situation by resignation and by leaving every thing in the hands of men whose methods he disapproves. To call it by no harsher name his action amounts to a virtual

shirking of responsibilities; and on his own showing his resignation deserves the strongest condemnation. Sir Pherozeshah M. Mehta did not retire from Surat and sink into oblivion, leaving all future political activity in the hands of a party from whom he differred on most essential points. His Highness the Aga Khan gracefully concedes that the League has now become popular and that it should be conducted on popular lines rather than on semi-dictatorial lines. We are glad to find that His Highness who has excellent opportunities of feeling the pulse of the community has come to the conclusion that if the League can be reformed, it can only be due on popular lines. This is the central point of the controversy and much of the rest is in the nature of a personal squabble with which the public are not concerned. It is to be hoped that on reconsideration Mr. Ameer Ali will see his way to withdraw his resignation and continue to help his community to take their rightful place in the country.

THE 'INDIAN SPECTATOR'

The first fruits of the Moslem mission to England consisting of Mr. Wazir Hasan and Mr. Mohamed Ali, have not been very pleasant to the community itself. One need not regret that the Right Hon. Mr. Ameer Ali has resigned the presidentship of the London Moslem League; he would have been wiser if he had done so earlier, for the feeling was widely prevalent that the active part taken by him in Moslem politics did not comport with the dignity of a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. In England somewhat different traditions may attach to the office of Lord Chancellor; and the law lords belong to different political parties, but, as Lord Haldane said the other day in Canada, they forget their politics even when they decide some great question of constitutional importance. Yet, with their more liberal traditions, the European members of the Judicial committee do not take as conspicuous a part in politics as did Mr. Ameer Ali. It seems that the Lord Chancellor told him that he would be wise not to join the dinner to be given in honour of the Moslem deputation from India, where political speeches would certainly be made. We are not told whether the Lord Chancellor's sanction was asked in accordance with existing practice, or because a hint had been conveyed to Mr. Ameer Ali from responsible quarters that his participation in Moslem politics had evoked undesirable comment. In any case when we remember the Indian practice, the self-restraint expected from judges in India, we cannot but congratulate Mr. Ameer Ali on his resignation itself. But one wishes he had tendered it in different circumstances. It is highly regrettable that a person in his position should have had occasion to complain of rudeness and threats and to cast upon the Lord Chancellor the resposibility for his refusal to join the dinner and the consequences that would follow therefrom. The episode rather detracts from the dignity of a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and we congratulate him on the circumstance that now that he has resigned his presidentship,

there will be no occasion for its repetition. H.H. the Aga Khan is more fortunate in his freedom from official trammels. He too seems feel that the young Moslem party is a little too impetuous to be restrained by him and the older leaders and he resigns his presidentship of the Central League in India on principle. According to his ideas the president must be elected and must frequently change as in the republic of the United States of America.

THE 'INDIAN WORLD'

Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt offers some very interesting peeps into the real nature of Mr. Ameer Ali in his very little known book entitled '*Indian Under Ripon*'. Mr. Blunt says that, in the eighties, Mr. Ameer Ali was looked down by his co-religionists as a renegade, who was, to all intents and purposes more like an Englishman than a Moslem. When Mr. Blunt took Mr. Ameer Ali to task for a letter the latter had written to the *Times* saying that all the Indian Mohammedans supported the action of the English Government in the matter of its treatment of Arabi Pasha, Mr. Ameer Ali said that 'he was sorry for the letter.' In the matter of the Ilbert Bill controversy, Mr. Ameer Ali told Mr. Blunt (on Dec. 22, 1883), that the final concord arrived at by Lord Ripon was 'ten times worse than withdrawing the bill'. Two days after this (on Dec. 24), Mr. Ameer Ali seems to have changed his opinion in the matter and he was 'now completely with the government'. On another occasion, when Messrs. Blunt and Ameer Ali were speaking at the government house, Lord Ripon came by, and Mr. Ameer Ali jumped up and pretended not to have anything to do with Mr. Blunt; but when he saw that Lord Ripon 'stopped to talk to me', says Mr. Blunt, 'he became more cordial'. At that time Mr. Ameer Ali had not developed his special enthusiasm for his community and had very often expressed himself against special religious education and special communal representation. It is now nearly thirty years from that time and much water has flowed down the Hooghly between then and now. With all the changes of time and ideas, however, Mr. Ameer Ali has been consistent in one matter at least and, that is, he has always stuck to the Government. It is really a great pity that the Moslem community of India should have taken such a long time in finding out the skin of this so-called champion of their interests.

THE 'PUNJABEE'

No tragedy is without its comic aspect, and the amusing feature of the recent split in the camp of the Moslem League is the plea which Mr. Ameer Ali put forward for keeping away from the public dinner that was proposed to be given to Mr. Mohamed Ali and Mr. Wazir Hasan. He had expressed his readiness, said Ameer Ali, to participate in a non-political dinner, but as the Aga Khan had made it clear that there would be political speeches, he had written to Mr. Wazir Hasan saying that he would have to obtain the

sanction of the Lord Chancellor. The number of occasions when Mr. Ameer Ali has made political speeches or otherwise taken part in political movements since his accession to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council it would not be easy to count on the fingers of one hand. The very fact that he has been prominently connected with the London branch of the Moslem League, which is an out-and-out political body and which, it must be said, has concerned itself not only with national, but international politics, shows that Mr. Ameer Ali has always regarded himself as a privileged person in this respect. The present, in fact, is the only occasion when the public has been told that Mr. Ameer Ali needs the Lord Chancellor's permission for anything that he may want to do. And the funiest part of the thing is that the plea is put forward in a case where he was not called upon to make a political speech himself, but only to participate in a dinner where political speeches might be made.'

Source : The Comrade, 15 November 1913.

26

THE COMRADE ON 'THE MOSLEM CRISIS'

We think the Mussulmans in India are in a better position now to form a correct idea about the unfortunate crisis forced on the League by Mr. Ameer Ali, the President of the London Branch. We have received by the last mail, the full text of H.H. the Aga Khan's letter written to Mr. Wazir Hasan in which he clears the whole position, and gives the history of the 'Wretched Dinner' of which so much was made by Mr. Ameer Ali and his supporters in the Anglo-Indian Press. Lectures were given, abuses were heaped on the heads of Messrs Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali who were shown to have huge and inordinate appetites for complimentary dinners and recognition, and the finger of scorn was openly pointed at the Mussulmans of India for having such men as prominent workers. A fine little storm was raised by the *Times* and Reuter's garbled accounts of the affair in which the words of Mr. Wazir Hasan were deliberately changed and twisted about to discredit them in the eyes of their friends and the *Pioneer*, the *Englishman*, the *Statesman* and even the *I.D.T* which ought to have known better, added their own comments and could not hide their pleasure at the split in the Moslem Camp. We in India who knew well both Messrs Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali and also Mr. Ameer Ali could not believe all this against our Agents but realized only too clearly that the difficulties that some of us had anticipated, crowded in with

greater force than that what we had made allowances for.

We would here like to say very plainly how we regard Mr. Ameer Ali. We have the greatest respect for him for the services he has rendered to Islam through his writings and we agree with His Highness the Aga Khan when he quoted in his letter to Mr. Ameer Ali, 'as Mr. Mohamed Ali himself said the other night at the meeting, it was your book that taught younger generations what Islam truly meant', Mr. Ameer Ali also took a bold position in connection with the Italian raid on Tripoli for which he was abused by the *Pioneer*, who has now suddenly become a great admirer of his. We admit all this but he must remember that we cannot allow his London Branch to work independently of the Parent League. The League must be formulated in India and the community shall never delegate its power to one man, howsoever eminent he may be. The All-India Moslem League, while adopting or changing its political programme would certainly consult all its branches and especially its London Branch, which has a position of unique importance. But once when that programme was adopted, all the branches whether in England or at Lahore would have loyally to carry it out.

If there were any workers in any of the branches, who could not accept it, they had the clear course open to them to do all they could to influence the Parent League to amend it, but it will be preposterous to suppose that the All-India Moslem League had one programme and its branch another. If the office bearers of any of the branches conscientiously believed that they could not work on those lines, they should resign their offices and their resignation shall have to be accepted whether they happen to be Mr. Ameer Ali and Mr. Shafi or His Highness the Aga Khan and Mr. Wazir Hasan. We cannot change our programme to suit the conveniences of individuals.

The All-India Moslem League last year made a very important change in their policy and which was accepted by the community, i.e. to prepare the country for the introduction of a suitable form of self-government. Now all the Branch Leagues whether in England or in India must accept this and work loyally. We do not know if Mr. Ameer Ali has accepted this or not, as he has been in sulks for about a year. If he cannot accept it, we are afraid his resignation will have to be accepted though it may be difficult to fill his place.

There is the further question now whether Mr. Ameer Ali even if he accepts the programme and works loyally for it, is qualified to hold the great office of the President of the London Branch. There is in the back ground the burly and ominous shadow of the Lord Chancellor. We hope we are wrong but we feel that Indian Moslem questions will be prominent in the near future, as in spite of His Excellency the Viceroy, there are officials who would not afford them that peace, of which after 3 years of travel, they are sorely in need of for quiet, steady hard work for their regeneration. If the Lord Chancellor does not give permission for attending a political dinner, how could Mr. Ameer he sure to represent our case and fight our battles in England ?

Let us now turn towards the two 'villians of the piece' and see if they are really such villians and deserve swinging from the highest tree in the country. We know Messrs Mohamed Ali and Wazir Hasan for two honest, brave, enthusiastic and capable workers, who whatsoever their other faults may be, will stand by their people through fair or foul weather. It was a critical and troublous time, when they left India for England, being entrusted with a difficult task. There were many difficulties in their way, as the Mussulmans had trusted a great deal too such on the support of the officials in India and had neglected to keep in touch with the public in England, who after all have a big voice in the affairs of the Empire.

They were strangers in England, being not known there. They also knew that they were not loved by the Indian bureaucratic world, especially in the United Provinces, where the conduct of some officials was on trial. The only assistance they could look up to was from the Moslem leaders in England, and from Mr. Gokhale and their other fellow countrymen there. His Highness the Aga Khan, who lives mostly on the continent, could not do more than what he did. It was Mr. Ameer Ali from whom they expected constant help and advice. It is not likely that circumstanced as were Messrs Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali, they would be mad enough to go and pick up a quarrel with a powerful and influential man like Mr. Ameer Ali. In fact we know on the best of authority that they did all they could to conciliate him. And what did they get in return ? Mr. Ameer Ali gauging nicely their weak position and backed up with influences that were Anti-Moslem, took advantage of it to wipe off old scores against both; Mr. Wazir Hasan for daring to introduce a policy though approved by H.H. the Aga Khan and the country but not approved by Mr. Ameer Ali, and Mr. Mohamed Ali for sending the Great Ansari Medical Mission instead of handing the money over to him slighted and insulted him, that was not the time to create a crisis. At his age, Mr. Ameer Ali was expected to have controlled his temper for a few weeks and when visiting India, he should have put the case before the Mussulmans and they would certainly have given him not only a fair and courteous but also a favourable hearing. Now they feel indignant and rightly that their own man went and joined those who were damaging the Mussulmans and they have a right to demand an explanation from him.

His Highness the Aga Khan did his best to smooth matters and we think his frank letters will be appreciated by all. But as His Highness says in his letter to Mr. Wazir Hasan, which we publish elsewhere 'I was not there on the spot, and even if I had been, in looking back I doubt very much if I could have done anything to avoid them.' We have no desire to be hard on Mr. Ameer Ali, but it is well-known that he is narrow and obstinate, and when once he sets his heart on a thing, no consideration howsoever high and noble would weigh with him. We know at one time he was jealous even of H.H. the Aga Khan who is himself the least jealous of all men we have met. We know how he dealt with Mr. Ali Imam. Mr. Kaderbhoy of Bombay, who

worked with him in London, sized him correctly. Nearly, all those who have returned from England and have had dealings with him, complain of him. An eminent Mussulman who was for ten years in England and who himself has a most angelic and sweet temper, said that 'Mr. Ameer Ali always carried a loaded six chambered revolver in each of his pockets in the shape of resignation, which he flourished half-a-dozen times in every meeting which he attended'. 'Good-bye Gentlemen, I am off; choose another president', this not on any important question but on most trivial things, season tickets, cab hire for the President. etc. People were prepared to put up with all this but the present case is quite different.

The Anglo-Indian Press is gleefully expecting another 'Surat' at Agra this Xmas. We know, the Mussulmans, better and have confidence that the community in spite of the few reactionaries energetically prompted by interested officials would exercise the usual good sense and carry its programme through. But if there does happen another Surat, it will be the reactionaries who would go out.

Source : **The Comrade, 6 December 1913.**

27

LETTER FROM MOHAMED ALI TO LORD MORLEY

Shortly after my arrival in England in the last week of September, I had the honour of writing to Your Lordship requesting an interview in connection with certain matters agitating the minds of the Moslem community in India and enclosing a letter of introduction very kindly given to me for Your Lordship by the Honourable Sir Lawrence Jenkins, Chief Justice of Bengal. In reply to that I was informed that Your Lordship was generally very busy and could not accede to my request.

May I hope that Your Lordship will now be able to accord an interview to my friend, Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan, Honorary Secretary of the All-India Moslem League, and myself?

I wonder whether Your Lordship's attention has been called to the campaign of villification, not only against ourselves, but also against a very large bulk of the Moslem community in India. We have tried repeatedly but without success, or at the best with partial success, to get rejoinders from us published in these newspapers and this makes it all the more necessary that we should approach some minister in England of sufficiently large sympathies, and with an open mind to whom we could explain the views which we share

with our co-religionists and our fellow-countrymen on some very important questions rightly affecting the interest of the Mussulmans and of all India, and in fact the interest of the Empire. We are not unaware of the fact that Your Lordship is not directly connected with the governance of India and that at your time of life it would be want of consideration on our part if we troubled you needlessly. Had we been able to avoid this and to approach any other minister, we should certainly have done so. But we regret to find that even in the brilliant ministry to-day, so little is known about India, and in fact through the Empire, there are not a dozen men whose knowledge of India can be considered in any measure satisfactory, or whose knowledge when combined together, can equal Your Lordship. This compels us, without any desire to flatter you, to trouble you once more with our humble request for an interview at an early date.

We could have communicated our ideas through a section at least of the liberal press which has very kindly invited us to do so, but there are certain matters which it is better to deal direct with the authorities than through the press or the public platform, and should Your Lordship be graciously pleased to grant us an interview, not only we, but millions of our fellow-countrymen and co-religionists would feel grateful.

An early reply is humbly solicited.

Source : The Comrade, 6 December 1913.

28

VICEROY'S VISIT TO CAWNPORE; PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS BY MOSLEM DEPUTATION AND HIS EXCELLENCY'S REPLY

His Excellency the Viceroy reached Cawnpore by special train on the morning of 14 October 1913 at 9–35 A.M. The railway station had been specially decorated by the Local Mahommedans, though the arrival was private. His Excellency was received at the station by the Hon'ble Mr. D.C. Baillie, the Hon'ble Mr. Ali Imam and other prominent officials. From the railway station His Excellency and party drove direct to the Machhli Bazar Mosque where the Hon'ble the Raja of Mahmudabad, Mr. Mazahar-ul-Haque and other prominent Mahommedans received his Excellency and party. His Excellency went into the mosque, a special carpet having been placed for him to walk on, and spent twenty minutes in inspecting it. He conversed freely with Moulana Abdul Bari, a religious leader of the Mussulmans, and

through him asked the Mahommedans to forget all that had happened. He was presented with a *har* by Moulana Abdul Bari. The party then returned to the Circuit House where a deputation of eleven Mahommedan gentlemen, including local Nawabs, Raises, trustees of the mosque and the secretary of the local branch of the Muslim League, waited upon his Excellency with an address.

THE DEPUTATION

His Excellency received the deputation at 11–15 A.M. The address was read by Mr. Fazlurrahman. Besides the eleven members of the deputation, a number of leading Mahommedan gentlemen headed by the Hon'ble the Raja of Mahmudabad, were present, among whom were Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haque, leading defence counsel in the riot case, Khwaja Abdul Majid, Dr. Naziruddin Hasan and others.

THE ADDRESS

May it please Your Excellency—We, the Mussulman residents of the City of Cawnpore, beg to approach Your Excellency's with the humble address of welcome on the occasion of Your Excellency's visit to this town. We remember with gratification and pride Your Excellency's last visit to our historic city when Your Excellency was pleased to lay the foundation-stone of the memorial to our dearly beloved late King Edward the VII, the Peace-Maker.

We greatly regret that recently the peace of our town has been disturbed by the events of the 3rd of August in connection with the Machhli Bazar Mosque, and we strongly condemn the action of those who took part in the unlawful act of throwing brickbats or otherwise behaved in a lawless manner, and we assure Your Excellency that we, the Mussulmans of Cawnpore, are the most law-abiding and loyal subjects of His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor.

We are fully aware of and grateful to Your Eecellency for your well-known sympathy with the distress and misery of Humanity in any form or shape and we beg to offer our most grateful thanks for Your Lordship's munificent donation in aid of widows and orphans in the loss that they have sustained in the recent disturbance.

We beg to assure Your Excellency that we have the fullest confidence in your justice and sympathy and in this spirit we are content to leave the decision of the questions arising out of the present situation in Your Excellency's hands believing that Your Excellency has at heart the best interests of our community.

THE VICEROY'S REPLY

Gentlemen, the address that you have just read is a source of profound satisfaction to me, since it contains not only an expression of confidence in my

justice and sympathy but of what I prize much more, viz., that loyalty to our King-Emperor which I am happy to think has always been one of the chief characteristics of the Mahommedan community in this country. Had I not been firmly convinced of the loyal sentiments of your community I would not have come from Simla to Cawnpore to-day. It is unnecessary for me to repeat here the assurance that I gave quite recently in the Imperial Legislative Council that there has been no change in the policy of Government towards the religious beliefs of the subjects of the King-Emperor in India, for you all know that this is true.

With the march of progress and civilization it is always possible that the construction of roads, railways or canals may clash with existing buildings, religious or otherwise; but you may rest assured that Government will always treat with the utmost consideration the claims of any who may consider their interest affected, and will always endeavour to find a solution of the question at issue in sense satisfactory to all concerned. Knowing, as I do, the generous and kindly character of your Lieutenant-Governor, I feel confident that if you had been equally anxious as I have been to find a solution of the question of the mosque you would have succeeded in doing so and in meeting Sir James Meston's wishes. Had this happened the sad and deplorable incident of the 3rd August would not have occurred and widows and orphans would not have had cause to mourn for their husbands and fathers. This is now past history, which I hope may soon be forgotten.

I have come from Simla with the express purpose of bringing to you peace. You tell me in your address that you are content to leave the decision of the questions arising out of the present situation in my hands, believing that I have at heart the best interests of your community. It is true that I have at heart the best interests of your community and I have given much thought to this matter and to a possible solution. After long and careful consideration I have arrived at the decision that an arcade of at least eight feet in height should be built, upon which the *dalan* could be placed in the same relative position as before, but on a higher level, thereby securing space for the pavement below, without interfering with the relative position of the buildings pertaining to the mosque. I regard it as immaterial to whom the land upon which it is built is to be considered to belong, but it is essential that the general public, as well as those who go to worship at the mosque, should be entitled to use it as a footpath. Further, the *mutawalis* should build the arcade and construct the pavement below, these constructions being in accordance with plans approved by the Municipal Board.

As regards those who have been charged with having committed riot on the 3rd of August, I wish to say a few words. I am your father and you are my children. When children do wrong it is the duty of their father while inspired by the most kindly feelings, to admonish them so that they may learn wisdom and not err again. My words are not addressed to you personally but to those who are charged with having committed riot and have now suffered

imprisonment for the last ten weeks. These, if guilty of violence, have put themselves in the wrong for they are accused of having resisted constituted authority and have thus not only broken the law but also the very well-known and universally acknowledged principles of the great Islamic faith which they profess to follow. The maintenance of constituted authority is the duty of Government and I say, as head of the Government of India, that under all the circumstances it will be maintained. Under ordinary circumstances it would have been the duty of the Government to prosecute and obtain the punishment of the prisoners but they have already suffered severely and, as I have said before I have come to Cawnpore to give peace, I also wish to show mercy. Those who instigated the riot and who are thus responsible for the harm that has occurred are the least deserving of consideration, but as a solution of the difficulty connected with the mosque has been found I am anxious that the incidents which aroused so much feeling and excitement should be now buried in oblivion. I trust, however, that if clemency is extended to the instigators the melancholy consequences of their intemperate oratory may be a warning to them and to others against similar reckless speaking in the future.

I wish the sufferings of all those who are charged with having taken part in the riot to now cease and I have, therefore, with the full concurrence of Sir James Meston and of Mr. Baillie, invited the Local Government to take immediate steps for the provision of Section 474 of the Criminal Procedure Code to be applied to all those connected with the riot, who have been committed to the Court of Sessions for trial. I devoutly trust that the solution of the question of the mosque and the decision that I have taken in connection with those now under commitment for trial may bring peace and contentment, not only in Cawnpore but amongst the whole of the Mahommedan community in India, that no action may be taken locally or otherwise tending in any way to perpetuate the melancholy memories of the past few months, and that all Mahommedans may unite together in loyalty to their sovereign and in loyal co-operation with constituted authority for the maintenance of law and order and for the peace, happiness and prosperity of the great and beautiful land in which we live.

Source : **Government of India—Home Department—Political Deposit A. Proceedings, October 1913, Nos. 100–08.**

29

THE CALCUTTA SPECTATOR ON VICEROY'S VISIT TO CAWNPORE

'Lord Hardinge has done so great a thing in the history of his Viceroyalty and for the matter of that, in the modern history of British India that its immensity cannot be too sufficiently realised at once. It has given 'peace' to the Mahommedans, it has given 'hopes' to all other communities, it has given 'other proofs' of his bold, indomitable nature to do things as best as they appeared to him irrespective of others' opinions, it has given 'a new example' of the greatest Executive coming to the door of the mere supplicant, to caress him to soothe him, and to impress upon him the principles of filial piety and at the same time maintaining the august prestige of constituted authorities.

Source : The Calcutta Spectator, 25 October 1913.

30

MANCHESTER GUARDIAN ON 'THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE MOSLEMS'

For seven or eight years before the Balkan War the Government in India pursued towards the Moslem community a policy of unmistakable, often avowed, preference. The higher officials everywhere, it appeared, were acting upon the assumption that Mahommedans' loyalty, encouraged by special concessions, could be relied upon as an offset to the aggressive Nationalism of Hindu politicians, and that in consequence the burden upon the Executive would be materially lightened.

During the past twelve months events have occurred to overturn this assumption, and it would be true to say that Lord Hardinge's Government is confronted with a situation hardly less grave than that of the Hindu unrest between 1905 and 1909. The chief disturbing influence, needless to say, has been the successive disasters in the Moslem world, and the chaos in the Balkans following the defeat of Turkey. Wide currency was given in India to stories of atrocities perpetrated by Bulgarians and Greeks, and in every province the Government was made to realise that the Mahommedan temper was becoming inflamed.

THE CAWNPORE CONTROVERSY

In the summer a local dispute at Cawnpore brought the trouble to a head. A projected street improvement in the city involved the demolition of a building attached to a mosque. The negotiations between the Government of the United Provinces and the Moslem leaders were badly mismanaged. Sir James Meston, the Lieutenant-Governor, acted, it is clear, with imprudence or imperfect knowledge and a wild riot on the first Sunday in August was attended with serious loss of life.

In the controversy which ensued the Moslem leaders stuck to their guns, insisting that the Government had broken faith in the matter of the mosque, and the country rang with recriminations. Thereupon the Viceroy intervened. The men accused of complicity in the riot were discharged; the case was stopped; the demolished building is to be restored. The upshot amounts to a grave censure of Sir James Meston, whose reputation in the Civil Service has hitherto stood not far below that of his predecessor in the United Provinces, Sir John Hewett.

THE RISE OF THE MAHOMMEDAN PRESS

Meanwhile, a new power has been arsing in India—the Moslem Press. Less than three years have gone by since Mahommedan journalism made its first serious bid for public attention. It is not sufficiently realised that until yesterday the immense Mahommedan population of India (over sixty millions) was to all intents and purposes inarticulate, practically every one of the influential Indian journals in the country being controlled by either Hindus or Parsees. The recent upheavals in the Islamic world have changed all that Moslem weeklies and monthlies have multiplied, and there is now published for the first time at Delhi, a Mahommedan daily—a little sheet printed in Urdu. And the Government is troubled by the presence of this new factor. On no other theory can its recent action be explained.

PRESS ACT PROSECUTIONS

For the coercive Press Act of 1910, by which the Hindu Press has been terrified into submission, is being applied to the Moslem papers with singular severity. Under this Act the local Government is empowered to demand financial security from the proprietors of any press upon which a newspaper is printed. Should the paper offend against the provisions (very widely drawn) of the Press Act, the security is declared forfeited and a fresh sum of money demanded. A short time ago security to the amount of Rs. 3,000 (£ 200) was demanded from a Moslem Monthly at Aligarh. The Press, being unable to pay it closed down. A Moslem religious weekly at Meerut—*Tawheed, i.e.*, Unity—had its security forfeited on account of its articles on the Cawnpore

troubles, and was ordered to furnish the maximum for a second security, Rs. 10,000 (£ 666). At Lahore, a well-established Moslem weekly, the *Zamindar*, has been similarly treated. Its first security has been confiscated because of articles criticising Sir James Meston, and the maximum (Rs. 10,000) demanded as second security.

THE DELHI 'COMRADE' CASE

The foregoing instances are all noteworthy, but they are of a less striking importance than the case of Mr. Mohamed Ali, lately decided in the Calcutta High Court. Mr. Mohamed Ali, a Moslem from the North-West with a university education, is now in England. He is editor of the *Comrade*, a weekly journal first published in Calcutta, and now published at Delhi, and of *Hamdard*, the little Urdu daily already mentioned. In May and June of this year Mr. Mohamed Ali reproduced, in successive issues, a pamphlet on the Balkan atrocities, bearing the title, 'Come over into Macedonia and help us'. The pamphlet, which was prepared in Constantinople, was an appeal to the Christian Powers to stop the abominations which were disgracing the Christian name. It was proscribed in India under the Press Act, the issues of Mr. Mohamed Ali's papers in which the pamphlet had been reproduced were confiscated, and security was demanded from his press. Fortunately, proscription by the Government of Bengal brought the affair within the jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court, and on 2 September a special bench of that Court, presided over by the Chief Justice (Sir Lawrence Jenkins), pronounced a judgment which is by far the most important so far delivered under the Press Acts.

Mr. Mohamed Ali lost his case, despite the admission of the Crown prosecutor that he had acted from the highest motives, and that the pamphlet contained nothing of a seditious character. The Chief Justice, in a careful analysis of the law, showed that the absence of seditious language was not sufficient to clear the petitioner : he must go further and show that it was impossible for any words printed in the paper to have any tendency to bring into hatred or contempt any class or section of His Majesty's subjects in India—'directly or indirectly, whether by inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication or otherwise'. That is, absolute proof of a negative is required if the provisions of the Act are to be complied with. 'Comprehensive words were used', said the Chief Justice, by the framers of the Act, 'to catch crime and the incitement to crime'. But he added :

It is difficult to see what lengths the operation of this section might not be plausibly extended to by an ingenious mind. They would certainly extend to writings that may even command approval......Much that is regarded as standard literature might undoubtedly be caught.

Lord Crewe, speaking last week to a gathering of new members of the Indian Civil Service, said ; 'It is no easy matter in India to draw the line

between what is inadmissible and what, however, little one may like ought not to be suppressed'. But the Indian Executive appears to have resolved that the expression of Mahommedan opinion and feeling, religious and political, must be stopped decisively at the source.

Source : The Comrade, 29 November 1913.

31

LETTER FROM HARDINGE TO MESTON
16 December 1913

'The Aligarh problem is very difficult one to solve. At the present moment Mohammed Ali and his brother appear to reign supreme, and I think we must be cautious how we deal with these two. In the meantime the interest of the University seems to have vanished into thin air. The Aga Khan has been to Delhi and spoke to me with much bitterness on the subject. He fully realises the situation at Aligarh, and told me that, unless there is an improvement in the situation, the subscribers will demand the with-drawal of their funds. From what he said it looks as though there will be wigs on the green at the Mahommedan Congress.'

Source : Hardinge Papers, 1913.

32

THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE, AGRA
30, 31 December 1913

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF MUSLIM LEAGUE

Ibrahim Rahimtulla, Kt., in the course of his Presidential Address at the Agra Session of the Moslem League said :

Gentlemen—I wish to tender my grateful thanks to you for the high honour you have conferred upon me in inviting me to preside over your

deliberations at this Annual Session of the Moslem League. I clearly recognise that it is the highest honour in the gift of the Community and my appreciation is all the greater because it was spontaneously conferred.

At a time like the present, when differences of opinion are strongly asserting themselves, and there is a general feeling that the Mussulmans of India have politically reached the 'parting of the ways', you will, I am sure, recognise how difficult is the position of your President. Gentlemen, I accepted the difficult task which you have invited me to undertake as a call of duty, and I have done so in the firm conviction that you will all extend to me your earnest help and assistance in the discharge of my duties and will willingly share the responsibility which as Mussulmans is attached to each one of us. The large and representative gathering of Mussulmans from all parts of India who have assembled here to-day, at great personal inconvenience, proves to my mind beyond the shadow of a doubt the strong vitality for organized political and public life possessed by our Community. I am confident that I may safely rely upon your sincere co-operation in making an earnest effort to bridge over the difficulties which confront us in a spirit of considered compromise, so that instead of parting we shall all become solidly united again, and in this way adopt the only line of action which will ensure the steady progress of the cause we have all at heart. In all organizations, such as ours, differences of opinion must prevail. It is the application of different minds to common problems and the full and free discussion of the various aspects of given questions which lead to the formation of matured decisions and advance public interest. Holding these views I am always anxious to welcome reasoned discussion of all questions affecting our progress and well-being—with this reservation that after a decision has been reached, we should loyally accept it and zealously work on the lines so laid down. This policy does not necessarily mean that a decision once taken should be irrevocable. No policy in this democratic age can be laid down which should be regarded in the light of the laws of the Medes and Persians—unalterable and fixed for all time. The decision so taken should be accepted as a basis to work upon, until such time as the general body of opinion may change in view of altered circumstances, greater experience, detection of flaws and drawbacks not foreseen, and similar causes. These decisions should then be reconsidered, and modified or altered as the then prevailing conditions may require. What appears to me of the utmost importance is that all discussions should be conducted on non-party and non-personal grounds, and people finding themselves in a minority should loyally accept the clearly ascertained decisions of the majority and sincerely co-operate in a spirit of military discipline in advancing the public cause on lines so laid down. Unless we are all prepared to work in furthering the cause of our community on these lines, I am afraid our progress will be retarded and very serious difficulties will continue to confront us. May I appeal to you, Gentlemen, and through you to the whole

of the Moslem community in India, to work for our common interests in a spirit of broad-minded, toleration and sincere co-operation ? If we do so free from all personal considerations, bearing in mind nothing but what is best for the common good, our progress will not only be sure and certain, but will be at a rate gratifying even to the impatient spirits amongst us.

THE CAWNPORE MOSQUE

You are all aware that for several months the Cawnpore Mosque question greatly exercised the minds of the Moslem community in India, and it must have been with feeling of relief that you noticed that it was happily solved by the farsighted statesmanship of H. E. Lord Hardinge, our esteemed and popular Viceroy. May I, at this juncture remind you of the noble sentiments to which His Excellency gave expression when, at Delhi on the occasion of his official entry into the new capital of India, he presided at the first meeting of the newly constituted Legislative Council meeting for the first time in Delhi ? In the memorable speech which he delivered on the occasion, His Excellency said :

> Still, whatever I may feel on the subject of the crime itself, I only wish to assure you and the whole of India that this incident will in no sense influence my attitude. I will pursue without faltering the same policy in the future as during the past two years and I will not waver a hair's breadth from that course.

Who will venture to deny that Lord Hardinge has faithfully fulfilled the statesmanlike pledges he gave to the people of India on that occasion ? The pareatal interest he has shown towards our countrymen has rightly won for him the hearts of the people. This incident is valuable not merely as an episode in the history of this country; the lesson which such a policy illustrates is of unestimable value, both to Great Britain and to India. Lord Hardinge has shown what cures sincere and fatherly sympathy, not in mere words of which we have had plenty in the past, but in actual practice, can easily accomplish. It has always been a marvel to me why the British officials in India do not make a studied attempt, by means of sympathy and consideration in practice, to win over the hearts of the people of the country. May I venture to tell them how ridiculously easy it is to succeed in this direction? One of the prominent characteristics of the Indian people is their highly developed sense of gratitude. In how many places, in times of stress and strain, have not the Indian people come to the rescue of Englishmen in the past, and in how many cases have they not gone to the length of sacrificing their own lives to protect the lives of Englishmen? If an attempt is seriously made by official India, as a religious duty, to try and see Indian problems from the Indian point of view, and if the official always keeps before his mind's eye that he is the servant of the people of India, he will capture the Indian imagination as nothing else will do. We shall not then hear the lamentations which are being constantly

dinned into our ears, of the growing difficulties of the governance of this country. It is his policy, which Lord Hardinge has laid before him and which he is trying to carry out in practice, that has so endeared him to the Indian people. Will the lesson be taken to heart by the official world in India? If it is, they will not only smooth their own path of those amongst the Indian public men who have been striving in the face of grave obstacles and impediments to make officials realize how potent the effects of sympathy and consideration are.

PLEA OF WEAKNESS

But there is a class of croakers who have said before and will say again, that it is all very well to talk about winning the hearts of the people; but what about British prestige? If Government are to surrender to every agitation started against official measures, the work of administration will become impossible and the British people under these circumstances may as well clear out of the country. It is this class of irresponsible people, though they may belong to the British race, which is largely responsible for any existing estrangement. It is people who imagine that the 'mailed fist' is the best policy, who are really responsible for the increasing difficulties which confront the official world. Let us calmly and judiciously examine v hat this cry logically means. It can only mean that once an official has taken a decision, in most cases without consulting the views of responsible people amongst those who may be affected by such decision, and has gct it ratified by Government on *exparte* statements, it shall be irrevocable. If the decision proves distasteful to the people concerned, they have constitutionally two courses open to them—(1) to petition Government, bringing to their notice how hurtful such decision is and to request a reconsideration of the question; (2) to continue the agitation by holding meetings, by getting interpellations put in the Legislative Councils, and by agitating in the press.

If the people affected confine themselves to the first remedy, the decision in most cases is adhered to on the ground that there was no real feeling against it amongst the people concerned.

If the agitation is carried on the lines indicated in the second alternative, it is contended that the agitation was manufactured by a few discontented men, that they were unnecessarily exciting the people who are always supposed to be quite content to accept decisions emanating from Government sources. When this plea however, is found untenable and the officials are obliged to recognise that the agitation is well founded and calls for remedial measures, it is even then strongly urged that no change or alteration should be made, in view of the fact that such action would be regarded as weakness and that the prestige of the officials would receive a death blow. A strong effort is then made to adhere to the decision previously announced, the logical consequence of such a policy being that the decision once taken must be rigidly

adhered to. May I enquire under these circumstances how should people act who desire reconsideration and amendment of the orders and decisions announced by the Authorities?

Fortunately there are high officials here who do not follow this plea, but deal with difficult and delicate problems in a wise and statesmanlike manner and thus render most valuable service both to Great Britain and India. I am sure you will all agree with me in thinking that Lord Hardinge is the foremost amongst such officials at present in India, and his action far from being open to criticism in deserving of the highest commendation.

I wonder whether those critics who periodically trot out the bugbear or weakness realize what that means. To my mind it can mean only one thing, namely, that the position of the British Government in India is founded on such flimsy bases that an act of tardy justice done to the people of India by the higher authorities as the result of strenuous representation against an executive order or decision, so seriously shakes the stability of the structure that a few such shocks would make the building totter and fall. Can the truth be further removed from this obvious inference? The foundation of British rule in India is laid on the bedrock of strength and righteousness, on its inherent sense of justice, and on fair-play. An act of justice call it merely if you like, under given circumstances, far from proving hurtful to the foundations of British rule in India to my mind has the effect of adding further buttresses to it if that was necessary, and draws from the depths of the people's hearts that feeling of gratitude and loyalty which is an asset of incalculable value to Imperial England. Has not this view been proved beyond the shadow of a doubt ? The resolutions passed by Moslem representative bodies and associations all over India on the Viceroy's announcement at Cawnpore has clearly shown how far-reaching in its effects His Excellency's policy has actually proved. No one demands that Government should forthwith yield to every agitation. All that we ask for is that our representations should be examined in a judicial spirit, and that when there is a good case for the amendment, alteration or withdrawal of specific orders of the authorities, the necessary action should not be refused out of deference to that bugbear, loss of prestige, any one venture to contend that our demand is in any way unreasonable.

'PRESTIGE'

I will not take up much of your time in dealing with the other bogey, namely, prestige. How much good feeling has been sacrificed in the past by acting upon the imaginary advantage of the word. Even Mr. Montague was obliged to deal with this bogey in the following pregnant words in the House of Commons :

> Time was no doubt when it was a most important function of this House to see—that the theory of Government by prestige was not carried to

excessive lengths in India. In the extreme of Government by prestige those who administer the country are I take it answerable only to their official superiors and no claim for redress by one of the ruled against one of the rulers can be admitted as a right. If for instance a member of the ruling race inflicts an injury upon a member of the governed race, no question will arise of punishing the offender and so admit imperfection in the governing caste or by not punishing him, and so condoning the failure of that protection of the governed which is essential to efficient Government. This illustrates as I understand the matter—the prestige theory pressed to its logical conclusion. I do not say that it was so pressed in India, it has always been tempered by British character, British opinion and the British Parliament. Whatever reliance there was in our Government of India is now giving place to reliance upon even handed justice and strength, orderly and equitable administration but great deal of nonsense is talked still, so it seems to me about prestige. Call it if you will a useful asset in our relations between the British Government and the educated Indian public. Do not misunderstand me and this I say especially to those who may do me the honour of criticising outside these walls what I am now saying. I mean by prestige the theory of Government that I have just described—the theory that produces irresponsibility and arrogance. I do not of course mean that reputation for firm and dignified administration which no Government can afford to disregard.

This speech was delivered in the House of Commons in 1911; while two years later, when H.E. the Viceroy has by an act of statesmanship calmed the lacerated feelings of the Moslem community in finding a reasonable solution of the Cawnpore Mosque difficulty, he is seriously charged by some of his own countrymen with having given a serious blow to the 'blessed prestige'. No further comment on such criticism of the Viceroy is called for beyond pointing out that this class of critics are so keenly solicitous of the 'blessed prestige' that they feel it would be shaken by the public dancing of Miss Maud Allan in India.

FIRING UPON THE PEOPLE

Following the wise suggestion made by H.E. the Viceroy when he visited Cawnpore and brought about a settlement of the question I do not wish to say anything more in regard to this matter. There is, however, one aspect of the question which calls for a few remarks. I would not have mentioned the subject if the incident had been confined to the Cawnpore Mosque affair only, but as it has a grave bearing on the future, I cannot restrain from speaking about it. I wish to invite your attention to the fact that under the existing law the power of firing upon the people under certain circumstances has been deliberately given to Government Officials, and there have been several instances during the past few years when this power has been exercised, resulting in serious loss of life. That the power of controlling an excited mob

by firing upon them under given circumstances should remain with the officials in the interests of peace and order must be readily admitted. At the same time adequate precautions are essentially necessary when the question is one of taking life. No ordinary circumstances could possibly justify the use of firearms against the people. We have to remember that whatever crowd in India, it is unarmed and its power of injuring the police and other people is very limited indeed. It will readily be conceded that this power should only be exercised on occasions when the position is so grave as to leave no other alternative for controlling and dispersing the crowd. There is bound to be considerable difference of opinion on this point and I therefore think that it is necessary both in the interests of the official granting the order to fire and the general public that some provision should be made by which the exact facts of the case may be authoritatively investigated. I would therefore advocate that the Government of India should lay down as a standing order that an independent Commission of enquiry, on which the Indian element shall be amply represented, shall be appointed to institute an inquiry within a reasonable time after firing had taken place. This Commission should be authorised to take evidence and to report upon the circumstances under which the order to fire was given. The very fact that such a Commission would be appointed on each and every occasion when firing has to be resorted to will have a wholesome restraining effect upon the official charged by law with the responsibility of taking life, and it will create a feeling of confidence among the general public that careful and independent enquiry will be made after the exercise of such power. It is, therefore, in the interests of both the officials and the general public that such a procedure should be laid down. Such an enquiry would save the official from serious adverse criticism to which in the nature of things he is open when life is actually taken. In Great Britain, in consequence of the greater development of democratic principle, firing is under serious control. During the recent Dublin riots, several members of the police were seriously injured to the extent of being obliged to be taken to hospital. Be it remembered that the British people are not subject to the severe restrictions imposed under the Indian Arms Act, and many men amongst a British crowd may be actually armed. Even then firing is only resorted to after all other alternatives have been absolutely exhausted.

The following extracts from Reuter's telegrams will clearly show what happens in Great Britain under circumstances decidedly more grave :

London, 31st August,

Two hundred civilians and thirty police were injured in last night's rioting. One has succumbed in Hospital.

London, 1st September

The riots continued in Dublin yesterday and two hundred cases in hospital for injuries received. It is stated that during the police charge following upon the arrest of Larkin a number of old men and women and children who were

returning from church were struck with police batons. *The Mayor announces his intention of moving that an enquiry be held into the conduct of the Police.*

London, 22nd September.

Serious rioting took place in Dublin last evening in connection with processions of strikers. The crowd attacked and wrecked tramears and pitched battles with the police ensued in which batons, stones and bottles were freely used. A number of rioters were taken to hospital and several police were injured.

And still there was no firing upon the crowd. In India the circumstances are entirely different. An exoited mob has no weapons of an offensive character beyond brick-bats and sticks. The people of India are as a rule highly amenable to the requirements of peace and order. In such a country the taking of life by firing upon the crowd is a more serious matter than in England. It is, therefore, doubly necessary to provide for an independent inquiry in all cases which lead to the taking of life. I can appeal with confidence to the British people and the British Government to support and to give effect to the suggestion which I have made in the interests of every one concerned, and I do so with confidence, especially because the whole trend of British policy is humanitarian. Government have never hesitated to take measures even when they may be regarded as unpopular if the object is to save life. The policy of Government in organizing large camps for the relief of famine-stricken people during time of famine and thereby saving thousands of lives which would otherwise be lost, is beyond all praise. The great impetus to sanitary measures throughout the length and breadth of this country, in spite of opposition in some quarters, has been studiously adopted with the object of preserving health and life. Nay, Gentlemen, the fundamental principles on which British rule in India is based, namely, absolute non-interference with religious rites, privileges and liberties of the people of India has been deliberately departed from with a view to saving life. I refer to the law which has been enacted prohibiting the immolation of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands. Suttees who under a high sense of religious sentiment voluntarily offer to sacrifice their lives by a hideous death are prohibited by law from doing so. No amount of religious sanctity attaching to this practice has deterred the British Government from enforcing by legislation that lives should not be sacrificed in this way. Is it too much to ask the same Government to provide adequate and suitable safe-guards against the taking of the lives of people who may have congregated together under some exciting cause, however, trivial, and had disobeyed the command to disperse, in some cases because they could not do so, however willing they may have been to comply ? Is it too much to ask that every official, however, well placed he may be, and whatever his status in the service of Government, should always have before his eyes the knowledge that far from receiving the unqualified support of the higher authorities in such a matter, he will have to

satisfy an independent tribunal of the circumstances which justified him in taking the lives of unarmed people ? As I have already pointed out, it is necessary in the interest of the good name of the British Government, in the interest of officials upon whom the grave responsibility of giving the order to fire is imposed by law, and in the interests of the general public, that the safeguard I have indicated should be provided.

INDIA'S CIVIL SERVANTS

The administrative standard which Lord Hardinge has held before us in dealing with the Cawnpore question lends point to the innovation which Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, recently introduced. I refer to the idea of inviting all the young men who have chosen an Indian career to meet him at Whitehall and to address them weighty words of counsel and advice. I am inclined to think however that he might have well improved the occasion by impressing upon them on the eve of their entering into the Civil Service of India, the fundamental truth that they come out to this continent not to rule India but to 'serve' India. The three letters of the alphabet I.C.S., which will remain attached to their names during the whole of their lives, and of which every civilian is justly proud, stand for *Indian Civil Servants* and do not represent any form of *rule*. If the members of the Civil Service would but constantly bear in mind the uncontrovertible fact that they are the *Servants of India*, and that they will, during the whole of the remainder of their lives, whether they are in active employ or in retirement, eat the salt of the people of India, and that as Mr. Montague recently stated in Parliament they must in co-operation with the Indian people for the promotion of the best interest of this country, not merely on the lines which may appear to them best, but on the lines which may be regarded as best jointly by both, the work of administering the country will be greatly simplified, the progress of Indian will be both rapid and smooth and the causes of estrangement and dissatisfaction will be up-rooted.

During the many years which I have spent in the service of the public in the Bombay Presidency I have come into close and intimate contact with a large number of civilians and I have made many intimate friends amongst them. As a class I have the highest admiration for their honesty of purpose, their stubborn integrity, their high ability and their sturdy devotion to duty, would it be too much to ask them to cultivate a better regard for those Indian public men who devote a largeportion of their time in the service of the country, who are actuated not by any sordid motives of personal gain but by singleness of purpose in serving their countrymen, to abstain from attributing motives where none exist, to treat their opinions with respect and consideration, and to feel that perhaps there may be another aspect of questions under discussion which may require different treatment ?

I have said that the civilians are servants of India, as their very designation

tion indicates, just as much as we all in the service of our mother-land. The difference is that while the former are paid for their services, the latter belong to the class not of the 'unemployed' but of the 'unpaid'. It has always been a wonder to me that men of high intellectual attainments and in active occupation in their own trades, industries, commerce and professions, men highly successful in their own private concerns, come forward in numbers, to serve the country at great personal sacrifice and in the face of severe discouragement. Can better proof be required of the sturdy patriotism of such men, who readily make serious sacrifices of valuable time and money in an endeavour to render all the help that lies in their power to ensure good Government in India ? This class of men are in my opinion the most valuable Imperial asset in India and deserve all the encouragement possible in their self-imposed task. Any feeling of suspicion and distrust towards that must result in enhancing the difficulties of the situation.

BALKAN WAR

It must be with a feeling of relief that you will have seen the end of the Balkan war. Turkey has not been turned out bag and baggage from Europe. Though its European dominions have been curtailed it has still a strong footing on the Continent of Europe. Adrianople, round which a strong Moslem sentiment has concentrated, again flies the Turkish flag. Turkish reverses have this redeeming feature, that they brought to the surface the fact that however much Mussulmans may be divided amongst themselves the religious sentiment of Moslem brotherhood is a living force throughout the entire Moslem world. Mussulmans in different parts of the world have all proved their readiness to come forward in a spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion to stand by their co-religionists in their hour of trial and trouble. It is the living miracle of Islam that the sentiments of Islamic brotherhood are seated deep down in the hearts of the followers of our revered Prophet and that the lapse of centuries has in no way blunted the effects of his noble mission.

FOREIGN POLICY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE INDIAN MUSSALMANS

During the time of stress and strain charges were made against the Mussulmans of India that they wanted to dictate the foreign policy of Great Britain, that they desired that England should go to war to protect the Moslem States in Europe and Asia. Can anything be further removed from the truth ? The Indian Mussulmans fully recognise the danger to England, with all its interests spread over the face of the whole world, to hint that she should thoughtlessly involve herself in a bloody war. It is doing the Moslems of India a grave injustice to suggest that they had the remotest notion of dictating what foreign policy England should pursue. And as a matter of fact they have never dreamt of doing so. All that they have urged—and I think they had ample

justification in doing so—was that England as the sovereign power of millions of Mussulman subjects should, out of regard for their sentiments, endeavour to see that Turkey obtained in the Councils of Europe, fair and just treatment. I do not think any one could venture to assert that the request, nay even the demand, that England should do its best in the Councils of Europe to ensure fair, just and equitable treatment to Turkey can possibly be regarded as being in any way unreasonable. It is because the utterances of responsible British Ministers appeared to them to indicate that England's sympathies were against the Turks that Indian Moslem feelings were naturally hurt and that they felt aggrieved. Can any fault be found with them under the circumstances ?

At the time of the declaration of war between Turkey and Balkan Allies, Sir Edward Grey said in the House of Commons that 'the great Powers are taking what steps they can to prevent a breach of the peace, definite proposals were made yesterday for collective steps to be taken by or on behalf of the great Powers to overcome these difficulties by representations to the Balkan States and at Constantinople and we agreed to them'. The steps indicated by Sir Edward Grey were the declaration that 'if nevertheless war breaks out between the Balkan States and the Ottoman Empire they will not admit as the result of the conflict any modifications of the territorial *status quo* in European Turkey'. This was at the time of the commencement of the war. We may reasonably draw the inference from this declaration that if Turkey had been victorious it would not have been allowed to retain any portion of the conquered territory. At the time war was declared it was generally felt in the Chancelleries of Europe that the Turkish soldiers would sweep over the surrounding territory belonging to the Allies, and if these expectations had been realized the might of Europe, including the power of England, would have been asserted to deprive Turkey of any territorial expansion as the result of its victories. But the tide of victory went the other way and the Balkan Allies proved victorious immediately the conflict had begun in earnest. This completely upset the preconceptions of the Chancelleries of Europe and they felt that the declaration of the maintenance of the *status quo* in European Turkey would be prejudicial to the Balkan Allies. Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, took early opportunity of then declaring that whatever may be the result of the war the Concert of Europe could not possibly deprive the victorious party from securing the fruits of their victories. Are the Mussulmans of India to be blamed if they feel that England was associated with the other European Powers in laying down and enforcing a policy that if the Turks had proved victorious in the combat, they would not have been allowed to obtain any territory belonging to any of the Balkan Allies, but that if the Balkan Allies proved victorious they would be permitted to annex important portions of the European Dominions of Turkey? Is it unreasonable that the Mussulmans of India should feel that fair and equitable treatment was not being meted out to their co-religionists

beyond the seas and that England was taking a prominent part in such treatment ?

MR. ASQUITH AND THE PEACE OF LONDON

Well, as you are aware, after the Peace of London was signed and the Balkan Allies fell out amongst themselves, resulting in a re-distribution of the conquered territory, Turkey, availing itself of the opportunity which became so providentially available, recaptured the town of Adrianople and the surrounding country with which a strong Moslem sentiment was associated. Was it wise, was it statesmanlike for Mr. Asquith to declare that so far as Turkey was concerned it would be required to lie within the boundary line settled at the Peace of London ? In the face of such and similar declarations from the highest ministers of the British Crown, no fault could be found with the Mussulmans of India if they concluded that England, far from trying to be just and fair towards Turkey, far from endeavouring to secure fair play to the Moslem Khalifate, was siding against it and was co-operating with other European Powers who are the declared enemies of the Turkish Empire. Under all this provocation, have the Mussulmans done anything which would attach any blame to them ? Have they swerved in the slightest degree in their feeling of sincere loyalty towards the British Crown. However painful the episode has been to them, they have exercised full self-control and restraint and their conduct far from being blameworthy deserves highest commendation.

SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION

I am appealing to you to exercise patience and restraint in criticism. In doing so I have not failed to realize how extremely difficult it is at times to exercise these virtues. The feeling of indignation and horror which has spread throughout this country in regard to the treatment meted out to our fellow-countrymen and women in South Africa has led to the use of language which under the circumstances could hardly be controlled. But in the face of the grave provocation to Indian feelings and Indian sentiments I cannot help expressing my sense of deep gratification at the masterly pronouncement which H.E. the Viceroy made in Madras. I know that the expression of his sincere feeling of sympathy with the people of this country has laid him open to severe criticism in some quarters. It is a curious anamoly that these very critics, who never forget to preach to us, Indians, the doctrine of submitting to the views of the man on the spot, who never fail to resent interpellations and criticism in the House of Commons on the plea that men on the spot must be considered to understand the position best, that strictures levelled in England against Indian Officials should be treated with contempt as unknowing and ignorant, are the very persons who have come forward to condemn the views and the suggestions of the man on the spot occupying the highest

executive position in this Continent. How far-reaching the effect for good which Lord Hardinge's speech at Madras has been instrumental in bringing about, can only be known to the people in India. Lord Hardinge, whose great merit is to keep himself in close touch with the people of this land, who manages to secure first-hand information of the extent of the feeling of indignation and horror that had permeated this country, has done by this pronouncement the greatest service to the Crown of England. Well, gentlemen, in spite of this criticism the Boer Government has been obliged to announce the appointment of a commission of enquiry. You all know the constitution of this Commission and the South African Indian opinion of the men chosen to sit upon it. Our demand was that the Commission should be so constituted as to ensure not only that the confidence of the people but that the representatives of this country should find seats upon it. This has not been complied with and although the suggestion for such representation has been supported both by official and non-official opinion in India, it has been ignored. Is it any wonder that the Indians feel under the circumstances that the enquiry will prove a whitewashing one and that the sore will remain unhealed ?

POSITION OF INDIANS IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

But the question that is facing us to-day is not merely the treatment that our fellow-countrymen are receiving at the hands of the South African Government. It cannot be narrowed down to the present residents in the South African Union. That question is undoubtedly emergent and requires to be dealt with forthwith, but the wider question can no longer be postponed but must now be faced and that question is 'what is the position of the people of India in the British Empire'. Australia is practically barred against us. Canada is contemplating legislation to prohibit Asiatic immigration. The attitude of South Africa is patent to you. The time is therefore ripe to ask whether we are common subjects of His Imperial Majesty the King, occupying identically the same position as the other subjects of His Majesty, or are we so in theory only ? Under the gracious proclamation of Queen Victoria, confirmed by the Royal pronouncements of Queen Victoria's two successors, pledges have been given to us in an unequivocable manner that we are the citizens of the Empire. In practice, however, we find that in South Africa, in Canada and in Australia we are regarded in a manner which it is difficult to express in moderate terms. We have, therefore, every right to ask the British Cabinet, through the Secretary of State, for a declaration whether they will manage to secure to us the rights and privileges of British citizenship.

If the answer to the question is in the affirmative, England has got to exercise the powers which legally vest in her to ensure to us such rights and such privileges. If we are not, in spite of Royal pronouncements and Royal

pledges, to receive the rights of British citizenship, if we are prohibited from settling in the British Colonies on equal terms with the white races, we are entitled to a clear and definite declaration on the point. It is necessary that we should clearly understand what our position actually is in the British Empire. If we are not entitled, in spite of the pledges already referred to, to equal rights of British citizenship, if that right on the declared authority of the British Cabinet is to be denied to us, then we shall be free to organise means and measures to protect ourselves against this indignity. Retaliation is a bad word but it has been freely used in this connection and I do not think any one would venture to assert that the use of the word is uncalled for. Our esteemed citizen, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, who has made the cause of the Indians in South Africa his own, considers that retaliation should be applied in the direction of a prohibition to all the South Africans from any employment under the Government of India and the restriction against the purchase of South African coal by the railways in India. I am afraid that retaliatory measures confined to these two things would hardly be successful in attaining the object we have at heart in enforcing the recognition of our rights of British citizenship by the Colonies of Great Britain. We will have to consider and device means which while living perfectly constitutional, may prove really effective. The intellectual capacity of the Indians is not so meagre as to despair of finding such an effective remedy, but the time for such measures has yet to come. We have thankfully to remember that the Indian Officials are supporting our cause and that many Englishmen in South Africa appear to be in our favour. A majority of the powerful English press is sufficiently outspoken. We have therefore, to wait for the final result of the present *contretemps* before, concerting and pressing effective measures in this behalf. There is no Indian who does not regret the necessity of being obliged to start a war of retaliation against component parts of the mighty British Empire, but the fault entirely lies with the British Cabinet. If the British Cabinet is absolutely powerless to secure the rights of British citizenship to the Indian subjects of the Crown, the whole responsibility of the consequences which such a policy will lead to, will be on their heads. I need hardly tell them that the result of such a course from the Imperial standpoint will be deplorable.

WHO WON THE BOER WAR

This leads me to ask a question which under existing conditions is of paramount importance. I should like to know who were the victors in the Boer War ? Whether England came out victorious and succeeded in conquering the Boer republics or whether it was the Boers who successfully defeated Great Britain. If Great Britain was in reality the victorious party, it should not be powerless to enforce its wishes upon the Boers. But from recent pronouncements it seems obvious that the British Cabinet is in reality

aboslutely helpless in the matter. The plea put forward is that in Self-governing Colonies, the British Government can merely use suasion and nothing else. If this argument is carried to its logical conclusion, it means that any legislation affecting the people in South Africa by the Union Parliament, shall be accepted irrespective of how it affects the different sections of the population. Well the union Parliament as it is constituted at present, contains a large Boer majority. It, therefore, follows that any Legislation which the Boer majority in the Union Parliament may pass imposing unbearable disabilities upon English residents themselves must receive the assent of his Majesty. England would be obliged under such circumstances also to declare that it is powerless to interfere with the domestic legislation of a Self-governing Colony. As a result of such legislation the English people in Natal may be hounded out of that Colony, and still the British Cabinet I suppose would sit with folded arms and declare to the world its utter helplessness to secure justice to their own people. If this is a fact then it clearly follows that though nominally Britain won the Boer War it was the Boers who were really victorious, and as a result of such victory annexed the British Colony of Natal to the Republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Can anything be more absurd ? Would Great Britain remain so indifferent if the Boer majority took it into their heads to act in the manner indicated ? Gentlemen ! It does not require any prescience to know that the whole of Great Britain would be excited from one end to the other and the might of Great Britain would come down on the recalcitrant Boers and the might of England would prevail. It is only when the persons affected are the people of India that this helplessness is manifesting itself.

A curious sidelight is thrown on the issue I have raised by the public pronouncement of General Botha, the South African premier. In the speech which he delivered on the 24th November he is reported to have said that 'Their country was part of the British Empire, yet they were as free as if they were an independent State on a footing of equality with the sister states and they were a sister state of England. Our first duty in the interest of the Union itself is in my opinion to stand on a *friendly footing* with the British Empire, without in any way departing from the least of our principles'. I should like to know what the British Ministers have to say in regard to this claim. If they admit it, could they still claim that they won the Boer War ?

We are told that it is an economic question which is at the root of the trouble. The Indians are thrift they can live more cheaply then than the white settlers and they can successfully compete with them in trade and commerce. The doctrine of the survival of the fittest does not presumably apply to South Africa. When the Indians demand legislative and executive measures for the protection of India's economic and industrial interests, the same school which is preaching economic considerations, in British colonies trot out the principle of the 'survival of the fittest'. They want to have it bothways. May I tell them such a policy can lead to no good ?

SEPARATION OF JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

The question of the separation of the judicial and executive functions has been so well threshed out throughout the country that I would not have referred to it here, but for the fact of the recent discussion in the Imperial Legislative Council on the subject. I do not wish to enter into the history of the question, as it is well-known to you. There is, however, one aspect of the discussion in the Imperial Council which requires to be brought out prominently. When the resolution on the subject was put to the vote, it was found that every Indian member, whether elected or nominated voted in favour of it. It is a memorable incident in the political progress of India that all the different elements constituting Indian representation unanimously demanded that a beginning should forthwith be made in the direction of separating the judicial and executive functions. The resolution was, of course, negatived by the official majority. Whatever the technical fate of this resolution it raise's constitutional questions of far-reaching importance.

CHOSEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE

His Majesty the King Emperor in reply to the loyal address presented at Delhi by the Imperial Legislative Council, called the members of that body 'the chosen representatives of the people of India'. It is an undisputed fact that all the elected members are chosen by such electorate as have been laid down by Government themselves. Many of them represent all the different provinces of India on a territorial basis. Some of them represent the land-owners and some the important Moslem Community on a communal basis. Others have been nominated by His Excellency the Viceroy himself. All India 'chosen representatives of the people of India' have unanimously asked that a beginning should be forthwith made with this reform. Though the resolution was lost by the vote of the official majority we are entitled to ask whether that will be the last word on the subject.

I cannot conceive that such will be the actual result. If the united voice of India expressed through their chosen representatives is powerless to secure a reform which has as in this instance received the support of many high officials, the recent Council reforms can hardly be regarded as an appreciable advance on previous conditions. We have secured more seats on the Legislative Councils, we have obtained the very valuable privilege of moving resolutions and dividing the house on them, but our function still remains that of a consultative body, who are free to express their views and sentiments, but whose united voice remains inoperative. Gentlemen, I am ready to recognise that under present conditions of the administration of the country it is necessary that there should be an official majority. I do so because the legislative functions vesting in these bodies are of a far-reaching character. A Legislative Council can not only pass or reject fresh legislation,

but can repeal and amend existing laws. It is, therefore, right that the power of the majority should remain in the hands of Government. But it is absolutely necessary that adequate safegaurds should be provided against the arbitrary exercise of such power.

It is not sufficiently recognised that the non-official members of the Legislative Councils in India occupy the position of what we understand as the 'opposition' in Parliament. I do not mean that they always oppose Government or that they work in the spirit of party. The career of the Indian members of the Legislative Councils indisputably proves that they have been actuated by a high sense of duty and patriotism, and have proved most useful to Government in their legislative and other work. What I do mean is that it is their function to represent the public view and offer suggestion and criticism in regard to measures introduced by Government. They work practically on some basis akin to an 'opposition'. It is now recognised as an axiomatic truth that the efficiency of Government largely depends upon a strong opposition. Any measures which would impair the efficiency of the opposition would unquestionably react on the efficiency of the administration. Such an opposition is represented by the non-official members in the Legislative Councils. There is, however, a fundamental difference between the 'opposition' in Parliament and the opposition in India, and I am sorry to find that this is not adequately realized by Government officials. In England the party on the opposition to-day may well hope to sit on Government benches to-morrow. The whole attention of the party and its press is directed towards winning the suffrages of the people of Great Britain so that they may succeed in securing a majority at the next general elections and occupy the Govt. benches. As I have already said, the party in the opposition to-day may be the party in power to-morrow. All the power and patronage—and the extent of this is colossal in England—which may vest in the party in power to-day, is enjoyed by the opposition to-morrow. The position of the 'opposition' in India is quite different. The power and patronage—and it is most extensive even in India—which must necessarily attach to the Government in office remains always in the hands of the officials. The Government benches must always remain in their occupation. The 'opposition' must always occupy the same seats. They can never hope to exercise under present conditions the power and the patronage vesting in Government and the telling influence which directly results therefrom. In spite of this serious disability, men are found ready and willing to accept serious sacrifices in the public cause. They are ready to accept Government displeasure in the honest and conscientious discharge of their duties. Scrutinize the class of men who occupy seats on the Legislative Councils In India and you will observe what classes they are drawn from. You will find amongst them men engaged in important trades and industries, in agriculture on an extensive scale, in professions in which they coin money. These men whose time is of the utmost value readily come forward at the call of duty to serve their country, without any hope of winning

a position which will secure to them the power and the patronage inseparable from the Government office. Nay, they have frequently to face official displeasure. I feel strongly that it is necessary in the interests of good government that the authorities should make every endeavour to rally this class to themselves. Far from regarding them as critics and agitators it is best to hold them in esteem as men who are materially contributing towards the better administration of the country and who deserve all encouragement possible in their self-imposed task.

'THE PRESS ACT'

The remarks I have made on the question of the general position of the non-official members apply equally well to the liberty of the press. It is through non-official members of the Legislative Councils and through the responsible Indian press that Government stand to obtain direct information as regards the feelings and sentiments of the people. Just as full encouragement is needed to secure the best men to serve on the Legislative Councils, adequate liberty of expression is necessary for the Indian press. I have no sympathy with those newspapers which regard license as liberty and are habitually transgressing the bounds of liberal journalism. At the same time it is necessary that no undue restrictions should either be imposed or by any action of Government officials, should be felt to stand in the way of a full and free discussion of public matters. The only independent source from which Government can keep itself in daily touch with the feelings and sentiments prevailing in the different parts of India is through the Indian press. If the actual effect of any measure of Government leads to a condition under which Government are themselves deprived of this direct knowledge, it is harmful and mischievous in its result. I have been constrained to make these remarks because I am personally aware of the fact that the Press Act, with the wide powers it confers, is operating in directly towards discouraging even well-established and long-standing Indian newspapers from freely expressing their views. I think that the time has come when the question regarding the operation of the Press Act should be carefully and judicially examined and the necessary measures applied in order to remove the disabilities now existing.

MOSLEM IDEALS AND POLICY

Having touched thus briefly on current events I should like to say a few words in regard to the question of our policy and our ideals. I do so with considerable hesitation; but I am obliged to deal with it in view of the fact that during recent times much difference of opinion has manifested itself among the Mahommedans of India, and statements have appeared in the press to the effect that the League has been captured by the young hot heads of the community, that it is tottering and is on the verge of collapse, that leading

men amongst us are abandoning the League either openly or quietly. It will strike any one that there must be something radically wrong with the machinery by which the Mussulmans have organised themselves to promote their communal interests, if these statements were true.

MY POLITICAL FAITH

Before I deal with this question, I should like to place before you my own faith and belief in regard to the political future of India. I do so with a view to removing the slightest chance of my attitude being misunderstood or misconstrued. Looking to the growth of political life in India during so short a period in the life of a Nation as the last 50 years, it must strike even a casual observer that the progress made by the country is phenomenal.. With the liberal educational policy adopted by the British Government, we have been able to come in close contact with the Western thought and culture and with the history to the rise and progress of democratic institutions in the West and their present ascendency; and it is but natural that our horizon should be widened and that we should become keenly anxious to move steadily forward on similar lines. I think we should not be true to our Motherland if we did not strive to attain a high standard of progress on democratic lines. I am one of those dreamers who firmly believe that given a sufficiently long spell of British rule in India, we are bound to become united as a nation in the real sense of the term. When that time arrives, (as it is sure to do), we shall have qualified to rule the country ourselves, and self-government will be absolutely assured to us. It will be the proudest day in the history of England when, having accepted the guardianship of a people over 300 millions in number, belonging to an alien race, divided into innumerable sects and creeds it has guided their evolution and has successfully carried out a far-sighted policy enabling them to reach a pitch of consolidation and solidarity, making them perfectly qualified to govern themselves. The debt of gratitude India owes to the Crown of England for the peace and order prevailing throughout the length and breadth of this vast Continent, the safety of life and property, the earnest and humanitarian policy for our welfare and advancement, the studious efforts to train and educate us to the highest standard possible is nothing to what India will owe when the work for this country is completed and the heritage is handed over to the children of the soil. I have called myself a dreamer and you are welcome to regard me as such if you like, but this I will tell you that I have profound faith in the realization of my dream and it depends upon you to exert yourself to fulfil the destiny which is inevitably yours. No country, such as India is, can remain for ever under foreign rule however beneficient that rule may be, and though British rule is undoubtedly based on beneficience and righteousness, it cannot last for ever.

India is our Motherland, our proud heritage, and must in the end be handed over to us by our guardians. I regard the connection of England

with India in the nature of guardianship over minor children. If I may apply the analogy I would say that the Hindus and the Moslems are two brothers, sons of Mother Hind and in a state of minority, and that Providence has chosen the British to be the guardians of the minors. I need not remind you that in the hour of our need two European nations, namely, France and England, applied for this guardianship and it was granted to England. How well, how nobly, the obligations so imposed have been discharged by England is evidenced in every direction to-day. The minors are gradually and steadily growing up in health and strength under the fostering care of a people who were the first to fight for democracy, and who have after centuries of travail and application raised it as a system to the present standard of efficiency. India is loyal to the backbone to England, not only for all that it has done for India, but for all which India may well hope to obtain in future. Loyalty of an alien people based as it is in India on a firm conviction of self-interest, is bound to be deep-rooted and genuine. Any suspicion of the deep-rooted loyalty of India is unjust and groundless. Constitutional agitation against Government measures there will be and there must be. We cannot convince our guardians without constitutional agitation and it is the common failing of all guardians all the world over, that they are difficult to be convinced of the steady growth of their wards. Such growth is largely imperceptible to them, taking place as it does under their very eyes. As I have said, the minors are in reality steadily growing up and their needs and requirements are multiplying. The wards would be false to the training which the guardian in the noble discharge of his duties has himself given if they did not respectfully ask, nay clamour, for larger allowances suitable to the respective ages to which they may have reached and the best policy to be adopted towards them is to recognise the fact from time to time and make further grants in a generous spirit.

BRITISH CONNECTION INDISPENSABLE

It will be obvious to you that it depends entirely upon yourselves how early you will realize your proud destiny. It will call for the best in your nature, you will have to be patient and persevering, you will have to be prepared for all calls of self-sacrifice and devotion to your Motherland. You will have to rise above petty jealousies and personal considerations, you will have to unite in a bond of Indian brotherhood to make your path easy in the stubborn task that lies before you. You will have always to bear prominently in mind that an early realization of your ultimate hopes and aspirations, depends wholly upon retaining in the land the beneficient rule of the Crown of England. During the transition period the presence of the British in India is absolutely indispensible. You are bound to grow to adult manhood in time and come into your inheritance, but you must in no way be impatient of your guardian. In trying to accellerate the pace do not retard your progress. We have to remember also that we shall not reach the goal by the use of physical force.

Anarchism and bombs never have in the history of any nation ensured progress or helped in attaining their end. Believe me, gentlemen, that when the time arrives the force of moral pressure will be irresistable and it will absolutely ensure the realization of our proud destiny.

GRACIOUS MESSAGE OF THE KING

This is fully borne out by the noble message which His Imperial Majesty delivered to you during his recent visit to India. As you are aware, it consists of three words]'*Educate*, *Unite* and *Hope*'. Can any message be more pregnant with far-reaching significance ? Can better words be found in the English language to indicate to you in what direction your future lies ? By the word '*Educate*' is meant not merely the passing of examinations. It is used in a broader sense and calls upon you to qualify yourselves for the noble destiny that awaits you. Your leaders during the past generation fully realized the significance of this word and they advised you to concentrate your attention on educating yourselves before everything else. Their advice to eschew politics at that stage was, as you will now recognise, highly wise. But for that concentration the Mussulman community would not have made that progress in education which we see all around us to-day. Involving the Mussulman community in political strife at that stage would not have been to their interest. They had lagged far behind in the race of education. Concentration on 'education' was essentially necessary. If the Moslem mind had been diverted into different channels, it would have proved highly detrimental to our cause. The community as a whole, following the wise guidance of their elders, devoted all their energies to educating themselves. The fruits which have resulted would not have been attained in any other way. I cannot conceive that the policy of abstaining from political life was meant to be permanent. It was clearly realized that when, as the result of concentrating attention on educational progress, the community had been raised to a sufficiently high standard, politics would come as a matter of course. How well that policy has succeeded, I need not tell such a representative gathering as I find assembled here to-day. Within the short period of six years since the date on which the Mussulman community organised themselves for political work, the progress made will be admitted on all hands to be highly gratifying. This is the result of concentration on education which as you will observe is the first word of the gracious message of His Imperial Majesty. May I ask you whether this experience does not teach us that it is best to concentrate our attention and our energies upon the next word of the Royal message, namely '*Unite*' ? You are aware that however much you may qualify yourselves by education and other means, you will have to unite yourselves in a common bond of Indian brotherhood before you can hope to reach any form of self-government. Having reached the necessary stage of union, there is nothing you cannot *hope* to obtain. There is nothing which will keep you out

of your heritage. Let every Indian take to heart the gracious message of our King, in his own person and family, and try to live up to it. Every true son of India owes this debt to his country, to act on the principles enunciated, and the future, though far distant, may well be regarded as absolutely assured to you. Well, let me appeal to you and through you to all the people of India to work for your Motherland on the lines indicated, and thus contribute to the ultimate fulfilment of the proud destiny which inevitably awaits you.

IDEALS

Having explained at considerable length my political faith for the future of India you will easily understand that I cannot object to the ideals which have been adopted by the two leading political organizations of this country. The Congress ideal of self-government on Colonial lines has the advantage of being clear and definite. The League ideal of self-government suitable to India appears to me vague and indefinite. You must have had good reasons for adopting it but I cannot help remarking that I would have personally preferred something which was more definite and distinct. Whatever the ideal I should like to appeal to you to bear constantly in mind that nothing should be allowed to create a feeling of impatience, a desire to reach it by short cuts, or a tendency to excite the passions of the people. Nothing is more detrimental to advance the cause of India than impatience and disaffection. Far from accelerating the pace towards the ultimate attainment of the goal, it will undoubtedly have the effect of setting the clock back.

We have recently heard a great deal about a divided feeling amongst the members of our community. It appears to me wholly unwise to fall out and be divided on a point which even in the opinion of the most enthusiastic amongst us will not be reached till after several decades of strenuous and united efforts. Whether the final consummation of our highest aspirations takes several decades or several scores of years or some centuries is in the womb of time. It largely depends, as I have already pointed out, upon ourselves. Why then waste our energies in fruitless discussions and dissentions upon the form of Government which we should strive to attain at the end of that indefinite period? When a sturdy union amongst all the conflicting elements prevailing in India of to-day is a condition precedent to any sound and steady progress, would it not be wise to devise means by which we may be able to concentrate our undivided attention on the problems of the day and by united exertions ensure steady and solid progress?

Every one must recognise that no form of self-government is possible in India unless the two principal communities, the Hindu and the Moslem, are closely and conscientiously united. What can be a nobler aim, a loftier goal than to endeavour to secure India united! Once we become sincerely and genuinely united there is no force in the world which can keep us from our

heritage; without such union the Indians will have to wait indefinitely for the realization of their fondest hopes. Instead of having differences and dissensions amongst ourselves at the present time on matters of remote realization, I would earnestly appeal to all true sons of India to concentrate all their energies, all their talents on the consummation of ensuring a united India. Then we might well leave the future to take care of itself, full of hope, and full of confidence. If the two sister-communities devote their energies and concentrate their efforts on the realization of such an ideal, in a spirit of reasoned compromise, all our difficulties will crumble away and India will rise phoenix-like from the ashes of discord and struggle to a fresh and robust life full of promise and full of hope.

MOSLEM POLICY

The next question which I must deal with now is what should be the policy of the League as representing the Mussulmans of India. The answer which I would give to the question is briefly this. Our policy towards the British Government should be one of unswerving loyalty and towards the Hindus one of brotherly love and regard. I hold that the policy which should guide us should be that of the younger brother in family towards his guardian and towards his elder brother. While fully maintaining his individuality and remaining keenly alive to his own needs and requirements, he should extend to his guardian his respectful homage and to his elder brother his brotherly affection and sincere regard. My advice to you to offer unswerving loyalty and respectful homage to your guardians does not mean blind or servile submission to all his mandates. Loyalty and homage are in no way inconsistent with representation and agitation. All the constitutional means which are open and available to you should be made use of, both freely and fully to advance India in every direction, to promote the best interests of our community and to secure better administration by moderate and sober criticism of Government measures. It is unnecessary for me further to dilate upon this aspect of the question, as I am sure you clearly realize what your constitutional rights and privileges are. Make the best use of these, and notwithstanding all the discouragement you may meet with, persevere in your efforts and thereby make your full contribution towards the better administration of this country.

When I am advising you to extend brotherly affection and sincere regard towards the elder brother, I am not foregetting that you are entitled to reciprocity at his hands. The union of the two brothers cannot stand on a one-sided arrangement, I call the Hindu the elder brother, and I am sure you will agree with me in the view that he occupies that position in the Indian family. He is senior in numbers, in education, in wealth and in many other ways. His obligations therefore under the Indian system of family life are necessarily greater. In order that there should be a sincere and genuine

entente each brother must be prepared to discharge his relative duties towards the other in the right spirit. Let us first examine whether the Mussulmans have endeavoured to discharge their obligations in the past towards the Hindus. If we have not done so, we ought to be prepared to make amends and rectify our conduct. You are all aware that the birth of organised Moslem political life dates from the day on which a representative deputation from all the parts of India, headed by our acknowledged leader, His Highness Sir Aga Khan, waited upon H.E. Lord Minto, pressing on the attention of what I will continue to call the guardian, the claims of the younger brother to share directly by election in the representative institutions in the country. This was the first sign that the growth of the younger brother had reached a stage when his needs and requirements were keenly felt, that the training which the guardian had provided for the children was having the same effect upon the younger child as it had upon the elder one, that the flame of patriotism had been kindled in him also (I trust never to be extinguished thereafter), and therefore he solicited those opportunities for the service of the public which had been given earlier for the benefit of the family. It appears that our steady growth was as imperceptible to the guardian as it was to the elder brother. But we could not longer remain passive spectators of the progress taking place all around us, and we desired to share the burden and the responsibility of service to our country. We craved for a part of those opportunities which had been made available to the people of India, and which had been enjoyed by the elder brother during the period of our infancy. The guardian recognised the force of our just demands and signified his willingness to provide those opportunities which were our legitimate due. How stubbornly the elder brother resisted this recognition of our just rights is now a matter of history.

In view of the cordial relations now subsisting between the two sister communities, I do not wish to dilate upon this point but I cannot help remarking that the elder brother lost a splendid opportunity of winning the younger one, at an impressionable age, wholly towards himself, by failing to realize the far-reaching consequences of wise statesmanship at that psychological moment. There appears to me nothing wrong or unreasonable in the demand of the Moslem community, for those opportunities of serving the public directly by election which have been conceded to the people of this country. The Indian National Congress, which stands for the highest national sentiment in the country, has had to recognise the special representation of the Moslems on the 'All India Congress Committee'. It has also laid down as a part of its creed that 'in any representations which the Congress may make or in any demands which it may put forward for the larger association of the people of India with the administration of the country, the interests of minorities shall be duly safeguarded.' May I enquire what difference there is in principle between duly safeguarding the interest of the minorities (and the Mussulmans form the most important of such minorities) in the

political rights and privileges which should be demanded in the future and those which have already been obtained ? I cannot conceive that the demand of the Mussulmans for adequate opportunities for representation on the public bodies in the country was in any way unreasonable or unjust or in any way militated against the ultimate realization of the brilliant destiny which awaits the people of this land. Wise statesmanship and sympathetic consideration of each other's needs and requirements are essentially necessary during the period of transition through which every country must pass before reaching its highest destiny. May I enquire whether the Moslem representative on the Legislative Council have been in any way wanting in public spirit or independence, and whether they have not sincerely co-operated with the representatives of the other communities in promoting the best interests of the country ? May I request our friends to consider what a tower of strength the association of Moslem representatives with the representatives of other communities furnishes in promoting the political cause of India ? When both the representåtives elected by the Hindu majority and by the Mussulmans on the communal basis jointly demand the political and economic progress of the country do they realize how difficult it would be for the guardian to resist such an united demand ?

I should like to call your attention in this connection to an extract from the able speech which Mr. Badruddin Tyabji, who afterwards became the Honourable Mr. Justice Tyabji, delivered in Madras as the first Mahommedan President of the Indian National Congress. He said :

> Gentlemen, it is undoubtedly true that each one of Great Indian Communities has its own peculiar, social, moral, educational and even political difficulties to surmount, but so far general political question affecting the whole of India are concerned, I for one am utterly at a loss to understand why Mussulmans should not work shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-countrymen of other races and creeds for the common benefit of all.

May I inquire whether we have not worked in the League on the broad principles laid down by a distinguished co-religionist of ours from the Presidential chair of the National Congress ? Examine the resōlutions which the League has passed from year to year and compare them with those passed by the Congress, and you will clearly observe that on all questions affecting the common interests of the people of India we have readily and sincerely co-operated. Idealists have however to remember that Mussulmans of India have their own 'peculiar, social, moral, educational and political difficulties to surmount,' and that they have therefore to maintain their organized associations and institutions. Remaining keenly alive to our own needs and requirements we have throughout the existence of the League extended a cordial hand of fellowship and co-operation to the sister communities, and I cannot give better advice than to ask you to continue this line of policy as the most foresighted and wise.

MOSLEM ATTITUDE

Two years ago, finding that Hindu and Moslem sentiment was becoming estranged and feeling that such a condition was detrimental to the well-being of the country, it was the Moslem community which took the initiative, and under the guidance of their recognised leader, H. H. Sir Aga Khan, went in the form of a special deputation from Nagpore, the seat of the Annual Session of the Moslem League, to Allahabad, the seat of the annual meeting of the Indian National Congress, to meet representative Hindus and to discuss means by which more cordial relations might be ensured. It was again the act of the younger brother, making a peace-offering to the elder, declaring in an unequivocal manner how keen and how anxious he was to reach a better understanding between the two. You are all aware that after an important discussion a representative Committee consisting of the leaders of both the communities was appointed for the purpose of discussing the points of disagreement and suggesting means and measures by which, in a spirit of reasoned compromise, more cordial relations might be brought about. Two years have passed since the date this Committee was appointed, and it is to be regretted that not a single meeting has yet been held. Whatever may be the cause for this long delay in meeting for such a laudable object, it cannot be gainsaid that we have been always anxious to discharge our obligations towards the elder brother in the right spirit. It is a matter of regret that such a splendid opportunity has not yet been utilised. If there are any reasons which make it difficult to get this Committee together, I would ask you to appoint another Committee for the same purpose. I make this suggestion because I feel strongly that in the interests of India as whole and those of each of the sister communities, it is pre-eminently desirable that representative men chosen by each should meet from time to time and discuss, points about which any disagreement or feeling may exist. Believe me, gentlemen, if a friendly discussion between the recognised leaders of both the communities takes place periodically, it will clear the atmosphere and bring them both much nearer together.

I have briefly indicated how anxious we have been to discharge our obligations towards the elder brother, and we shall always be ready to carefully consider any points on which he may feel that we have failed to do so. If there are any such points, I trust they will be authoritatively communicated to us and I need hardly say that they will receive our anxious attention. I have already said that the brotherly relations between the two cannot stand on a one-sided arrangement. We are, therefore, entitled to ask that the elder brother should indulge in a little introspection and examine for his own guidance whether he has discharged his obviously greater duties towards the Moslem. I am sure we shall all be very interested to learn the directions in which this has been done. For a thorough under-standing between the two, I think it is necessary that the suggestion which I have already made, *viz.*, to

appoint a representative Committee, should be acted upon, and that it should meet periodically and discuss all the points affecting the interest and relations of each with the other. It is because I feel that far-reaching result for good will accrue from such a course that I have referred to the matter once again.

THE LEAGUE AND LONDON

I am sure you will all appreciate the reasons which have induced me to keep to the concluding part of my address, any reference to the recent happenings in London. You will recognise how delicate the matter was. The Mussulmans of India have a high regard for Syed Ameer Ali who has during the period of nearly half a century rendered yeomen service to the cause of Islam. His great achievements in the field of literature, his masterly exposition of the faith of Islam, his active co-operation with our distinguished leader H.H. Sir Aga Khan in promoting our political advancement are few of the directions in which he has conferred lasting obligations upon the Mussulmans. On the other hand we have Syed Wazir Husan and Mr. Mohamed Ali, two of our foremost workers in the interests of Islam. During the comparatively short period of their career, they have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt, their sterling worth, and their whole-hearted devotion to the Moslem cause. The singleness of purpose with which they have identified themselves with the best interests of Islam has justly earned for them high appreciation. It would have been under the circumstances most unfortunate if the differences of opinion which manifested themselves in London should have had any permanent effect. At a time like the present we could ill-afford to lose the services of such a veteran as Syed Ameer Ali, whose presence at the head of our political organisation in the centre of the vast British Empire is of great value. I am sure, Gentlemen, you will have learnt with a feeling of relief and gratification that through the kind offices of our esteemed leader, H.H. Sir Aga Khan, the prevailing difficulties have been overcome and that the London League is again a united whole ready to work strenously and zealously for promoting our best interests.

There is, however, one point in connection with the recent discussion which requires to be emphatically laid down. The London League must be regarded as a branch of the Parent League, as its very name indicated, and must work on the line of Policy laid down in India. Differences of opinion must be welcomed, but differences of principle cannot be allowed. Constitutional means are open to each Branch of the League to raise questions of principle, but in that case the required procedure must be implicitly followed.

Gentlemen, you must have been amused at the criticism which has been recently levelled against what are termed the educated young Mussulmans of India. Sedition and disloyalty appear to be the stock in trade of some critics. Need I tell them that there is not even the shadow of disloyalty or sedition

amongst the Mussulmans of India, whether young or old? Need I add that His Majesty's Mussulaman subjects in India are as thoroughly loyal to-day as ever they were before? It is perfectly true that the vivifying influence of education is having upon them the same effect as it has had upon the sister communities. They have become politically articulate and have organized themselves for the purpose of promoting the best interests of their community. They are availing themselves of the constitutional means open to every section of the Indian people. Can a single instance be quoted in which they have gone in the slightest degree beyond the accepted limits of constitutional agitation? Not only, have we not overstepped its legitimate bounds but I will unhesitatingly declare on your behalf that nothing is further removed from our minds than to engage in any movement or action which has in it the least tinge of disloyalty or sedition. It would be to the advantage of every one concerned if people would talk a little less of Indian disloyalty and sedition.

In conclusion, I beg to tender to you my grateful acknowledgments for your indulgence in bearing with me for so much time. I am deeply touched by your kindness and consideration and beg to tender to you once again my sincere thanks for the high honour you have conferred upon me by inviting to preside at your deliberations.[1]

II

RESOLUTIONS

The first resolution was then moved by His Highness the Aga Khan to the effect that in view of the growing political needs of the Mahommedan community, it was necessary to take steps to establish a permanent national fund. His Highness in a short speech strongly appealed for funds, the want of which considerably hampered the work of the League. Every political organisation and party in Europe and America had immense funds at its back and the absence of funds in the League was a national disgrace. If the League was to do any good work, it must be self-supporting; otherwise it could not command self-respect. The fund must come from the nation, otherwise it could not be called a national fund. His Highness said that the committee which was to be formed to collect the fund would be announced later.

The resolution was duly seconded by the Raja of Mahmudabad and passed.

SOUTH AFRICA

The second resolution which was moved by Nawab Zulfikar Ali Khan

[1] Presidential Address of Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla kt-at the Agra Session of the Moslem League, December 1913. Bombay-Times of India Press, 1913.

expressed the indignation of Indians at the ill-treatment of their countrymen in South Africa and tendered respectful thanks to Lord Hardinge for his pronouncement in Madras. The speaker in the course of his speech reiterated the demand for the repeal of the three pounds-tax and the removal of other disabilities under which Indians are suffering. He said the personnel of the Commission appointed by the South African Government had given satisfaction to none in India as it had not the confidence of Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues who were immediately affected by it. He eulogised the services rendered by Mr. Gokhale in this connection, describing him as a disinterested patriot, whom all sections in India claimed as belonging to them. The speaker said Indians in South Africa demanded nothing that was not due to them. Their demand was that they should be recognised as subjects of His Majesty the King-Emperor. If the British Government had taken up the matter seriously the affair would have been settled long ago. The public opinion in England could exercise adequate influence on the affairs of colonial governments was evident from the fact that after the storm of indignation raised in India and England, the Union Government lost no time in appointing the Commission. He appealed to all sections to demand justice until justice was done. The speaker in conclusion expressed the obligation of all India to Lord Hardinge for his most generous pronouncement in Madras and thanked him for deputing Sir Benjamin Robertson to lay the Indian side of the case before the commissioners.

Mr. Abdul Wadud, Secretary, Moslem Association, Bareilly, said he had been commissioned by Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk to support the resolution on his behalf. The Nawab was too old to attend the League's meetings. He also sent garlands for the President, Mr. Wazir Hasan and Mr. Mohamed Ali and for Mr. Zafar Ali Khan who had, however, not yet returned.

The President on behalf of the Nawab then garlanded Mr. Wazir Hasan and Mr. Mohamed Ali, amid repeated cheers from the auditorium.

The resolution regarding South Africa was then duly passed.

THE EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIARY

The Hon. Mian Mohamed Shafi moved the third resolution which ran as follows; 'That the All-India Muslim League urges the separation of judicial from executive functions and the placing of the judiciary under the control of the highest Court in every province.' Mr. Shafi said there was no necessity to say much or to put forward any fresh reason in support of the scheme of separation because Government had long acknowledged the urgency of that popular demand. It was the duty of Government to fulfil the pledge given by Sir Harvey Adamson from his place in the Imperial Legislative Council. It was a matter of deep regret that a solemn promise had not been fulfilled. The only thing that could enhance the prestige of Government was to take people into their confidence. The Congress and the All-India Muslim League had passed this resolution year after year and Government did not require any

further proof that the demand for the reform was strong and unanimous.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Samiullah and supported by Mr. Mohamed Ali. The latter said that two arguments which had been put forward by officials with great emphasis against the separation were those of prestige and expenditure. He was sure the argument of prestige had long been exploded. As for expenditure, the people of India were prepared to meet any extra demand on their finances. He said he did not care for the maintenance of any prestige unless it was based on justice and righteousness and such prestige would be enhanced by the separation of executive and judicial functions.

Mr. Mohamed Ali added that the argument of prestige was the best reason for, instead of being any reason against the separation, for in effect it amounted to this that an Executive Officer demanded obedience to his will from the people in matters in which they were free to follow his advice or not by keeping them in fear of the powers he possessed as a Judicial Officer. This was a form of blackmail which it was wholly un-British to levy, and once the voters in England realised this they would press the Home Government for a long overdue reform. As for the possibility of increased expenditure, his experience of Baroda where the proposed reform was in full working order throughout the State belied such fears. But it was highly significant that although in demanding higher salaries and pensions, more rapid promotions and increased generosity in leave and furlough rules, the officials were so many Oliver Twists, they had a sudden access of thrift the moment the separation of judicial and executive functions was suggested, and every Assistant Collector felt burdened with the load of responsibilities of the Finance Member.

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried.

On 31st December the usual resolution in favour of communal representation met with some opposition by Moslems who desired an understanding on the subject with the Hindu community.

A resolution was moved by the Hon. Mr. Rafi-ud-din (Bombay) which ran as follows : 'That the All-India Moslem League once again records its deliberate opinion that in the interests of the Mussulman community it is absolutely necessary that the principle of communal representation be extended to all self-governing public bodies, and respectfully urges that provision for the adequate and effective representation of Mussulmans on Municipal and District Boards is a necessary corollary of the application of the principle to the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, and at the same time essential to the successful working of those public bodies.'

The speaker said the resolution was very important yet it should be passed without much discussion as for the last six years it had been unanimously passed at every sitting of the League. Lord Minto acknowledged the justice of the demand long ago.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Zahoor Ahmed (Allahabad).

Mr. Mujibur Rahman (Bengal) then moved the following amendment : 'That the All-India Moslem League is of opinion that in order to protect the

rights and safeguard the interests of Mahommedans it is absolutely necessary that they should be adequately and effectively represented on all local self-governing bodies and urges upon the Government to make provision for such representation, and the League is further of opinion that the proportion of elected members on local bodies should be increased.'

Mr. Abul Kasim, in seconding, said he was as much anxious as his co-religionists for effective representation in councils and local bodies. He explained the difference between the original resolution and the amendment. He did not attach so much importance to separate electorates as to effective representation.

Mr. Mohamed Ali moved the second amendment, which ran as follows: 'That the All-India Moslem League is of opinion that the consideration of the question of communal representation in self-governing bodies should be postponed for a year.'

Mr. Mohamed Ali said that in India there were two communities, the Hindus and Mahommedans, and it would be impossible for either of them to annihilate the other. If either community ever desired such a consummation it had had several centuries at its disposal to try this particularly foolish experiment. It was too late to try it again, and if it was not to be tried, why not try the methods of mutual conciliation ? It would be to the ultimate interest of India for the two communities to work together. He said the Hindus had always opposed separate representation in the Congress, but this year, out of regard for Moslem feeling, they had not passed the resolution. This clearly showed that the Hindus were convinced of the necessity of a settlement by consent. He wanted the two communities to unite and it was no disgrace for Mussulmans to move forward in the matter. They must show that they were prepared to meet the Hindus even more than half-way. He urged this not because the Hindus wanted reconciliation, but because the procedure, he suggested, was in perfect keeping with the teaching of the Prophet who prayed even for those who had injured him. He would not apportion any praise or blame at present. Both communities were at fault, and both must excuse one another. He made it clear that his views on the subject of communal representation had undergone no change except that the operation of the system in actual practice confirmed him in the belief that the solution of the difficulties of nation-building in India would be the extension of the system of communal representation. Unity would come to India through this apparent separation. India would be united in a Federation of Faiths. But that was not the question before them at the time. All that he asked for was the postponement of the usual resolution on the subject in order to emphasise the points on which there was complete agreement between the Hindus and the Mussulmans and to minimise the points of difference which, he fervently hoped, would be settled by consent when both communities felt fully convinced of the good intentions of one another and became ready to approach each outstanding question in the spirit of reasonableness, equity and compromise. It was undoubted that the two

communities stood closer together than they had done at any time during the last quarter of a century, and although recent events in the United Provinces had to some extent dimmed a comparatively cheerful prospect, that was all the more reason that the consideration of that question on which there was considerable difference of opinion between the two communities should be postponed for a year in order that the prospect may not grow gloomier. He appealed in the name of expediency to those who only too often paraded it as their sole virtue and begged them not to disregard the claims of those cardinal virtues of theirs, sobriety and moderation.

Mr. Jinnah, in seconding the amendment, strongly appealed to Mussulmans not to press the question this year. The question was of the utmost importance and the proposal that it should be postponed till next year was a responsible one. He urged them to consider the question dispassionately, not from the point of view of present gain but of lasting advantage in the future. He assured his co-religionists that by demanding special representation they would get only two watertight compartments. The position was extremely difficult. They had begged the Indian National Congress to drop the question which they did, and it should not be too much to ask Mahommedans to postpone the question for one year. In politics expediency was of the utmost value. There were many reasons why he asked his co-religionists for a postponement, but he could not give all his reasons in public. He finally begged Mussulmans not to press the question, for if they did they would get the shadow and not the substance.

THE AGA KHAN'S APPEAL

His Highness the Aga Khan came forward and made a stirring appeal to those present to consider the question dispassionately. He said the question was not whether Mahommedans would renounce what they had got. The question was whether the time was propitious to pass a resolution this year. In his opinion it would be better to concentrate on more important problems like that of South Africa. Time should be allowed to the leaders of the two communities to arrive at a settlement. If no compromise were arrived at, they could take up the question next year. It would promote the cause of Islam if they showed their good intentions to their neighbours.

THE AMENDMENT LOST

The Hon. Mr. Raza Ali (Moradabad) said it did not require much display of enthusiasm to convey the urgency of the demand for communal representation. In the Punjab and the United Provinces Mussulmans were nowhere as far as representation on local bodies was concerned.

Mr. Mazarul Haque, Barrister-at-Law (Bankipur) said that he was alone when he made similar proposals at Lucknow last year, but now some leading

Mahommedans held similar views to those he held. Their amendment might be lost but the discussion showed who was right and who was wrong. The object of Mussulmans should be to keep pace with other communities. The welfare of India depended on the union of Hindus and Mussulmans. He all along held that separate representation was harmful to the interests of Mussulmans. He entreated his co-religionists not to press the resolution this year.

Nawab Zulfikar Ali and several other speakers followed. They unanimously contended that nothing would be lost by postponing the resolution for a year.

The Hon. Mr. Abdur Rauf (Allahabad) said the original resolution must be pressed and he was supported by the Hon. Mir Asad Ali Khan, Mr. Alay Nabi and several other speakers.

The President said the question had been amply discussed both by supporters of the resolution, as also by supporters of the amendment. He had only one alternative left and that was to decide the adoption of the original resolution or the amendment by votes.

After a prolonged discussion it was decided, by a ruling from the chair in favour of Mr. Mohamed Ali's contention, that the voting would be in accordance with rule 32 which laid that votes should be recorded according to the allotment of the number of members to the Council of the League by provinces.

After the votes had been recorded the result was declared as follows: For the amendment for postponement moved by Mr. Mohamed Ali, 40 votes. Against, 89 votes.

Mr. Mujibur Rahman's amendment was withdrawn and the original resolution was declared passed.

REPEAL OF THE PRESS ACT

On the motion of Mr. Abul Kasim, Seconded by Dr. Nazir-ud-din Hasan, the League unanimously resolved that the Press Act be repealed specially in view of the recent judgment of the Calcutta High Court.

INDIANS AND THE ARMY

Mr. Abdul Wali Khan (Peshawar) moved that the time had arrived when the Government should give Indians a share in the defence of their country by appointing qualified Indians to higher posts and commissions in the Army for which Europeans alone are now eligible. He said it was unnecessary to recount the feats of valour performed by native troops in various campaigns. On many a battlefield it had been seen how much the Indian could be trusted in military affairs. The resolutions being duly supported was carried.

PUNJAB CHIEF COURT

The next resolution was moved by Mr. Gul Mohamed (Ferozepur) and was to the effect that the All-India Moslem League is of opinion that the status of the Punjab Chief Court should be raised to that of a chartered High Court. The mover said the question had long been before Government and no more time should be lost in giving effect to what the resolution urged. The Punjab had already expressed its emphatic opinion in favour of the scheme.

The resolution was carried after being duly seconded.

INDIANS AND BRITISH COLONIES

Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami, IMS (retired) moved the following resolutions : 'That the All-India Moslem League records its deliberate opinion that the present status of Zanzibar should not be changed and that the present rights, privileges and status of Indians in British East Africa and Uganda should remain intact.' The mover said the whole world was watching what was happening in South Africa and he had no doubt that the people of India were anxious that their fellow-countrymen should not suffer in any way in any part of the world. This resolution, as well as the next resolution which protested against the continuous journey clause in Privy Council Order, No. 920, which had the effect of preventing Indians from going to Canada, were unanimously carried.

EXECUTIVE COUNCILS FOR THE U. P. AND THE PUNJAB

Mr. Mohamed Ali moved the next resolution which urged the establishment of Executive Councils in the United Provinces and the Punjab. The speaker said that the population of the United Provinces was no less than forty-eight millions, which was more than that of Great Britain, where the Government was vested in the King-in-Parliament in which the voice of the people was predominant. The benefit of such a system was that if one man was going wrong, his action could be checked or rectified by others. In India, however, the unaided judgment of one administrator was relied upon for the good government of half a hundred million souls. With the greatest goodwill he could not attend to all the work that came to him, and in effect he had an Executive Council in the Secretaries and Under Secretaries on whom the work actually devolved. But they had all a Member of Council's powers without his responsibity and the result of the divorce of responsibility from power was as usual deplorable. The speaker referred to Sir John Hewett's standing in the way of this reform, and the hopes entertained of it on Sir James Meston's appointment. The result of the debate in the U. P. Council was not conclusive as Sir James Meston himself had stated. He now hoped that Sir James would support the universal demand for an Executive Council and he trusted that in pressing this

reform in the Punjab also he was not any more 'disloyal' than those stalwart 'loyalists' of the Punjab who assured him that they were just as anxious as he for placing this necessary check on the autocracy of Lieutenant-Governors. Such questions as this and the separation of the judiciary and the executive, the placing of the judiciary under the highest judicial tribunal and not under the executive, and the raising of Chief Courts of which the judges were appointed practically by the Lieutenant-Governors to the status of a High Court of which His Majesty appointed the judges—such questions, said the speaker, were the truest test of so called loyalty and disloyalty, and it seemed to him that there were more distinctions than differences.

The resolution was supported by the Hon. Mr. Fazal-ul-Haq (Bengal) and was carried.

MAHOMMEDAN ENDOWMENTS

The next resolution, which prayed Government to insist on an enquiry into the general purposes and manner of administration of existing Mussulmans endowments, designed mainly for public benefit, was moved by Mr. Fazle Husain and carried.

COW SACRIFICES

The Hon. Mr. Fazl-ul-Haq moved a resolution to the effect that while recognising the necessity of respecting the legitimate sentiments of the Hindu community regarding the manner of offering cow-sacrifices. On the occasion of the Bakar'Id, the League protests against the action taken by the local authorities of Fyzabad and other places in the said matter, which in the opinion of the League constitutes unwarranted interference with the religious rights of the Moslem community.

Both the mover and the Hon. Mr. Abdur Rauf said that all differences between the communities at a time of a religious festival should be settled by the communities themselves and the authorities should not be allowed to interfere. Mr. Rauf asked the respective communities to devise such methods as to avoid all causes of trouble and respect each other's feelings. The British Government were loved because of their promise of non-interference with the religion of the people and on that account they would protest against any official interference in their religious ceremonies.

PRESERVATION OF SACRED PLACES

On the motion of the Hon. Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhry (Bengal) the following resolution was unanimously carried : 'That the All-India Moslem League urges upon Government the imperative necessity of taking all legislative and other steps necessary to safeguard the sanctity and existence of,

and to keep intact, all public places of worship and other sacred places in India.' In a very brief speech, the speaker urged that to give effect to the resolution the Land Acquisition Act should be amended.

EXTENSION OF THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT

The next resolution urged the extension of the permanent settlement to such parts of the country as were ripe for it, and that where Government deemed it inadvisable to do so, judicial restrictions should be imposed on over-assessment. The speaker eulogised the services of the late Mr. R. C. Dutt who had rendered admirable services to India on questions of the land revenue policy of the Government. He said, the agrarian trouble of India would be settled once for all if the permanent settlement were extended all over the country.

There were some dissentient voices against the first part of the resolution and Mr. Mohamed Ali was among the opposers.

The resolution was, however, carried by a majority.

THE INDIAN COUNCIL

Mr. Jinnah moved a resolution urging the constitution of the Indian Council. The resolution was passed on the same lines as that adopted by the Congress. Mr. Jinnah urged that the salary of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British estimates. He also urged that the Council should be advisory and not administrative. The Secretary of State at present was playing the Great Moghal more than any Moghal ruler of India.

The Hon. Mr. Abdur Rauf said that if the salary of the Secretary of State were placed on the British estimates, English people would have a firm grip on his action.

The Hon. Mr. Rafi-ud-din moved an amendment to the effect that the following words be added : 'That the Mahommedan representation should be duly safeguarded in any extension or modification of the Council of the Secretary of State'. Mr. Mohamed Ali seconded this.

The amendment being accepted By Mr. Jinnah, the entire resolution was carried unanimously.

THE CAWNPORE MOSQUE CASE

The last resolution of this year's sitting was moved by H.H. the Aga Khan and ran as follows : 'The All-India Moslem League begs to place on record its warm appreciation of the wise and courageous statesmanship with which His Excellency the Viceroy dealt with the Cawnpore mosque case, and expresses its deep sense of gratitude for his bringing peace to Cawnpore and the Moslem community in a manner which has enhanced the faith of the

people of India in British Justice'.

His Highness, who spoke in Persian, said the truth was with the Mussulman community and it was upheld by His Excellency the Viceroy, who set aside the order of the Lieutenant-Governor. He restored the mosque and Mussulmans got back their right. It was now their duty to thank the Viceroy and he asked Mahommedans to pass the resolution unanimously. Although on some occasions individual officers were too theoretical, justice could always be counted upon in the end.

The Raja of Mahmudabad, supporting in Urdu, related the history of the mosque affair. He said that those engaged in the Cawnpore affair had to bear great sufferings. Every kind of appeal that was made had been refused. After all justice had been done. The hundred and five prisoners who suffered immensely had all been released and His Excellency had not only restored the national honour of Moslems but also the prestige of British Justice.

Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, editor of *Al-Hilal*, said justice was not obtained from the Local Government from which the people expected justice, but from the heights of Simla. Though he knew that justice could not always be expected from individual officers in this country, he knew for certain that justice would ultimately come from the British Crown.

Mr. Mazharul Haque said no one was more grateful to the Viceroy than himself. No better settlement could have been arrived at and he gave a brief account of what happened at Cawnpore and how much relief he now felt. He thanked Mahommedans for their liberal support. In conclusion he said he knew how much Lord Hardinge was abused by the Civil Service in this country, but he had maintained the highest traditions of British rule.

The resolution was received with great acclamation and carried unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

On the motion of Mr. Wazir Hasan, the election of some office-bearers for the All-India Moslem League was carried through. Mr. Wazir Hasan announced that His Highness the Aga Khan had resigned the Presidentship of the All-India Moslem League. He thought it would be a calamity for Mahommedans when His Highness resigned.

The President said that, however painful the decision of the Aga Khan, it was irrevocable, and they had to accept it. He, however, appealed to the Aga Khan not to place his resignation in their hands to-day and to continue as President till the rules of the League were altered.

His Highness said he would remain President for the time suggested. He said that in no case would he sever his connection with the League as Vice-President.

THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT

The Raja of Mahmudabad proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair.

With cheers for the President, the Aga Khan and the Raja of Mahmudabad the current session of the League broke up at 7-30 P. M.

Source : **The Comrade, 10 January 1914.**

33

THE LEAGUE AND ITS LONDON BRANCH

Although it is undoubted that 'Anglo-India' was extremely anxious that the All-India Moslem League should go back upon the decision at which it had arrived last Easter as regards its ideals, and a bastard 'split' conceived by the *Jo-Hoo-kams* of Moslem India was expected to see the light of the day in the 'socond Surat' after nine moons' gestation, no one can deny that genuine differences of opinion could also exist of the Subject and assume formidable proportions. But we do not know how any one can convince us that equally genuine differences of opinion could exist on the subject of the Right Honourable Mr. Ameer Ali's demands, and how they could culminate in a 'split' in the League. No one can deny Mr. Ameer Ali's great ability and the services he has rendered to Islam as the author of several valuable works on Moslem faith and history. In fact it would be an impertinence for most of us even to bear testimony to these undoubted services. Nor is it likely that any one will question the zeal and energy with which Mr. Ameer Ali worked in England for securing for Mussulmans separate electorates in Indian legislatures, though here honours were divided, and some of the proposals of Mr. Ameer Ali in this connection did not commend themselves to many of his co-religionists. These matters, however are not. in question and those who intrude them in the present discussion prove either their incapacity for clearly judging political issues or their desire to cloud those raised by Mr. Ameer Ali in order to bring discredit on those with whom the Right honourable gentleman chose to quarrel.

II

Now Mr. Ameer Ali demanded for the present an annual subvention of Rs. 1,800 for the London Branch from the All-India Moslem League, and while requiring 'adequate guarantee that the support would be regularly and

punctually forthcoming', desired it to be absolutely unconditional. Before Mr. Wazir Hasan became the Honorary Secretary of the All-India League the annual subvention was only Rs. 750; but soon after his appointment he increased it to Rs. 1,000, and was contemplating a further increase of Rs. 800, as Mr. Ameer Ali desired, when the latter sent his premptory demand. His letter of the 22nd October which we have already published is, we are sorry to have to say, characteristic of the temper of its author. Needless self-laudation, unjust depreciation of the merits of other workers, assumptions as regards the absence of 'fictitious method of advertisements' in his own work which only served to betray him, false complaints of want of appreciation of his labours by his community, vain threats and unimpressive warnings—all these accompany this premptory demand. Mr. Wazir Hasan could well have deferred replying to this letter; but Mr. Ameer Ali wanted that before he left England in three weeks' time the Honorary Secretary of the All-India Moslem League 'will be good enough to inform us of the views of the Council'. And because he did so in the most unexceptionable manner, the President of the London Branch deemed it fit to resign his high office.

The London Branch has never been self-supporting. In addition to the All-India League's subvention, H.H. the Aga Khan has been liberally assisting it, and we think Mr. Ameer Ali has been in receipt of funds from other leading Indian Mussulmans also. We believe the annual subscription of the London Branch is five shillings, and although there are several hundred Mussulmans in Great Britain the total realised from members' subscriptions does not exceed £ 8 or a modest sum of Rs. 10 a month. This is because most of the Mussulmans in Great Britain resent the manner in which the Right Honourable Syed Ameer Ali acts as the dictator of the London League and brings out, after the least difference of opinion, his threadbare resignation. With reference to this, Dr. Abdul Majid, LL.D., Lecturer at the Colonial Institute, Dr. Ansari who left England only in 1911, and Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami could unfold a tale which would be far from edifying. A recent instance of such differences of opinion was the London League's action over the Cawnpore affairs. While Moslem India was seething with indignation the London League took no action whatever. But when Lord Hardinge announced a settlement of the question, the right honourable gentleman was among the first to come out with a resolution of thanks. Having no share in the grievance he needs the lion's share in expressing gratitude ! But that was not all. He pressed on the London League a resolution of thanks to Sir James Meston ! Even the worm turns, and the Committee stoutly opposed the resolution. The right honourable gentleman was outvoted and in this extremity he turned for support to—Mr. Wazir Hasan ! He asked the Committee whether it would pass the resolution if the Honorary Secretary of the parent League approved of it. We honour the Committee for their reply. They said that they where prepared to hear anything that Mr. Wazir Hasan had to say on the subject, but they must have an opportunity of criticising his suggestion if they felt disposed to do so,

and would no more abide by an *ex-parte* judgment of the Indian League's Secretary than by the dictatorial pronouncement of their own President. For once the ever-ready resignation was not brought out, for it had the greatest possible chance of being accepted. When the Mussulmans resident in Great Britain assembled at the Waldorf Hotel, at the invitation of Mr. Sadiq Hasan, the universally honoured and admired son of Khan Bahadur Shaikh Ghulam Sadiq, and subsequently at Caxton Hall, at the invitation of the Committee formed at the previous meeting, they were all of one mind in condemning the manner in which Mr. Ameer Ali exercised his dictatorship, though they acknowledged submissively enough that the office-bearers would have to act in a semi dictatorial manner in a League most of the members of which were only students. With a view not to offend Mr. Ameer Ali's susceptibilities they did not pass a resolution openly complaining of his manner of dictating to the members, but merely desired that under the auspices of the London League a meeting of all Moslem Indians resident in Great Britain should be convened, and steps should be considered for increasing the number of its members. Had Mr. Ameer Ali called such a meeting, he would have learnt things that it is necessary he should learn.

But fearing a general condemnation Mr. Ameer Ali ignored this resolution of the meeting, and merely acknowledged the resolution asking him to withdraw his resignation, although here too he ignored the qualifications with which that request was carefully hedged.

III

While on the subject of the London League's financial position it may not be out of place to mention that, considering the amount of work it does, its scale of expenditure is too high. A shorthand typist, who does ten times as much work for Mr. Ameer Ali privately and for the various concerns in which he is interested as for this moribund League, is employed permanently on the League's establishment. When Mr. Ameer Ali resigned last October—although he continued to work as before on the pretext that the accounts of the League were not wound up even after a month and a half—he had to look out for other resources where from to pay his stenographer. The Red Crescent work was at a standstill. But there was still the proposal of a Mosque in London, which was so dear to him that he was even prepared for its sake to let the working Mosque be leased out to Christian lodgers, rather than be handed over to Khwaja Kamal-ud-din for divine worship, for fear it may jeopardise his own project. He therefore tried to place the stenographer's salary on the London Mosque Fund; but thanks to the Committee the attempt failed and precautions were adopted to resist similar raids in future. Those who have been intimately connected with the London League also know that a considerable portion of the League's income is consumed by a subsidy secretly paid to a journalist who had at one time worked in India and is now one of the roving hordes of hacks

that run in and out of Fleet Street and Printing House Square. This amount does not in all probability appear on the books of the League, but a similar amount received from some Indian Moslem donor does not appear on the credit side either, so that the London League's Committee have no opportunity of objecting to a subsidy paid in return for puffs such as the *Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Morning Post* and the *Daily Graphic* have recently published.

IV

Now Mr. Wazir Hasan's reply to Mr. Ameer Ali's premptory demand for a guaranteed permanent subvention was no more than this :

> I do recognise that an efficient League can be maintained here only at considerably increased cost, and I have discussed this matter with H. H. the Aga Khan, who, I am glad to say, would be prepared to accept my considered suggestions in this behalf.
>
> As regards the parent League itself, you cannot be unaware of the fact that if it has starved you here, it has had to starve itself also in India. But now that it is coming more and more into line with the wishes of the community, it is tapping new financial resources, and I hope on my return to succeed in a great measure in collecting together a large fund to serve as a Reserve Fund for our political work. Naturally the London Branch must be supported out of it, but our efforts to convince the members about your requirements here would succeed in proportion to the support which the London Branch gives to the work of the parent League and its projects.

We would venture to ask at this stage what there was in this reply to distinctly offensive communication at which Mr. Ameer Ali could flare up—after three days' earnest search for supposed insults.

Now note Mr. Ameer Ali's reply :

> You also indicate that the subvention from the Central League to the London League would be in proportion to the support the latter gives to the 'work and projects' of the Central League. So far the London League has cordially supported all projects which, in its considered judgment it deemed to be for the benefit of our people and has refrained, with the object of maintaining an appearance of solidarity, from giving expression to its disapproval of resolutions which it considered expedient in the best interests of the community. From this course it will not deviate under my presidentship.
>
> The condition which you now wish to impose on the discretion and judgment of the London League I regret I cannot accept. It is my settled conviction, repeatedly declared in public, that the Mussulmans of India, whilst claiming a full recognition of their legitimate interests and due consideration of their feelings and susceptibilities, should cultivate a sense of proportion and work in harmony and a true spirit of accord with each other and the Government.

So long as I am connected with this League I will submit to no outside dictation, nor allow it to adopt any programme without the fullest consideration of its consequences to our community.

V

This introduces the second and more important demand of Mr. Ameer Ali. As Mahomed Ali had pointed out at the meeting of the London League's Committee, no periodical subvention can ever be unconditional, unless it is to be a recurring gift. But in that case, he who asks for a free gift does not usually adopt the tone that Mr. Ameer Ali thought fit to adopt in his letters of the 22nd and 27th October. Even Mr. Ameer Ali could not have ventured to appeal to the world on the question of an unconditional subvention. But there was another demand artfully held back and this preposterous demand now showed to the world the entire hand of the right honourable gentleman. In 1908 when the London Branch was founded it was modest enough to call itself a branch, and the very first words of Mr. Ameer Ali's first annual report were 'The London Branch', which also appeared on the cover of the report. More recently, however, Mr. Ameer Ali dropped this modest nomenclature and stood forth as 'The All-India Moslem League, London'. This, we presume, was one of those imperceptible silent reconstitutions of the London League on a basis of co-ordination of which Mr. Ameer Ali is so fond. He is a historian of considerable repute and we ask him whether it was not precisely this process of imperceptible silent 'reconsitution' of Bengal, Deccan and Oudh 'on a basis of co-ordination' which led to the disintegration and downfall of the once mighty Moghal Empire. There was this difference, however, between the two processes. The satraps ofthe Moghal Empire, although equally impatient of 'outside dictation' or discipline—as the same thing may variously be called—took good care all the same to obtain from a weak Emperor a warrant for their own independence and insubordination. Rather than be such a weak Emperor H. H. the Aga Khan has preferred to resign his own office, so that he leaves the All-India Moslem League and its London Branch to settle the matter without making him responsible for the consequences. But he has shown clearly enough that dictatorial and even semi-dictatorial methods are now out-of-date, and he, at any rate, is genuinely glad that it is so.

VI

On the 27th October—Mr. Ameer Ali unexpectedly felt, or declared that he felt—after full three days' cogitation in the course of which he showed his readiness to give a complimentary dinner to Mr. Wazir Hasan, and subsequently applied to the Lord Chancellor even for participation in a political dinner—that he had been insulted by Mr. Wazir Hasan in the letter of the 24th on the subject of the dinner. In that case, if he did not feel inclined to deal directly with

Mr. Wazir Hasan, it was open to him to report the matter to the All-India League, which would no doubt have publicly censured Mr. Wazir Hasan if he had in fact insulted Mr. Ameer Ali. This he did not do, but in a wholly unexpected manner turned on his own League and threw his resignation in its face. Naturally the surprise of his League was unbounded. In the Committee meeting, when his resignation was considered, not one word escaped any member in condemnation of Mr. Wazir Hasan. The sense of the meeting was that Mr. Wazir Hasan's explanation was both full and satisfactory. But even if Mr. Ameer Ali was not satisfied, why, asked the members, should he treat the London League as a Whipping Boy and visit on them the sins of Mr. Wazir Hasan? Mr. Wazir Hasan had already begged him to withdraw his resignation, and in the meeting even offered to withdraw the personal portion of his own letter in spite of his very full and adequate explanation. But Mr. Mohamed Ali at this stage thought it necessary to obtain both from His Highness the Aga Khan and Mr. Wazir Hasan the declaration that neither of the distinguished office-bearers could commit the All-India Moslem League to any new principle, particularly when it conflicted in the clearest manner with the existing rules of the Indian League. Thereupon everyone present begged Mr. Ameer Ali to refer the question of the unconditional subvention and the independent status of the London League to the All-India League for authoritative decision, and to withdraw his resignation pending the final settlement. But relying on the past success of such bluff, and leaning, alas! on the now broken reed of the Moslem oligrachy, Mr. Ameer Ali spurned all such prayers. He had three well-known partisans at Lahore, Allahabad and Moradabad, and no wonder that they rushed to his aid without waiting for a moment for the publication of the full facts of the case, or as it happened, the correction of Reuter's wholly misleading and incorrect cable. As for any regard for the central organisation, it is too much to expect a sense of discipline from those who preach it from the housetops in these paradox-loving days. Of this we make no complaint. But the rest of India was silent in spite of the provocation supplied by Reuter's serious error. Lord Roberts who had justified the Tripolitan massacres on the score of exigencies of war, when the whole civilized world, including all England, condemned it was pressed into service as a friend of the Mussulmans, and presumably also their guide and philosopher.

VII

Now, if Mr. Ameer Ali was deliberately of opinion that it was inconsistent with his dignity and destructive of the usefulness of the London League to accept a conditional sebvention from India and the status of a branch of the All-India League, he should not have waited on the flimsy pretext of winding up the League's accounts, but should have made his resignation immediately effective, and left it to the All-India Moslem League to accept or reject his terms. Or he could have withdrawn his resignation pending the Indian

League's decision, and submitted the matter officially for its consideration and settlement in a few weeks. But the fact was that the silence of India disillusioned Mr. Ameer Ali very soon, and he only sought an opportunity of withdrawing his resignation *after* the departure of Mr. Wazir Hasan, but *before* the All-India League's Agra Session. This was so obvious that Mr. Mohamed Ali felt sure enough to cable to the *Comrade* from Marseilles to the same effect. Four days after this Messrs. Ameer Ali, Latif and Anik wrote to the London League Committee withdrawing their resignations, and three days later Reuter cabled the *Times*' version of the last scene in this opera-bouffe, which we publish elsewhere in full. Now here is a curious 're-constitution'. Mr. Ameer Ali resigned on the 29th October and Messrs. Latif and Anik, following the principles of Larrikinism, went on a 'sympathetic strike'. But the resignations could not take effect, for Mr. Anik was proving his abilities as an expert accountant by delaying over accounts of some hundred odd pounds for a month and a half. Everything, therefore, went on as usual as if Mr. Wazir Hasan and his so-called insults and dictation had never existed. No change whatever occurred in the rules of membership of the London League or the All-India League, but less than six weeks later, Messrs. Ameer Ali, Latif and Anik appeared as usual on the scene one fine morning to announce the unusual fact that the entire universe had altered over-night. 'The London All-India Moslem League has been reconstituted', clucks the *Times* as if over a new laid egg that had been hatched in the Printing House Square incubator. But on examination the egg appears to be the ancient product of 1908, relabelled 'Fresh' in 1911 and 'New-laid' in 1913.

VIII

If this make-believe pleases Mr. Ameer Ali we have no reason to object. But legal fictions have the habit of occasionally over-riding the law and from being invented *adjuvandi causa* became innovation used *corrigendi causa*. To this we shall always strongly object, and it is with the object that we emphasize the facts of the case. With reference to this question, Mr. Wazir Hasan's opinion contained in his reply to Mr. Ameer Ali's last letter is well worth reproduction. He wrote : You have, however, introduce in your letter a matter of principle which is of the most far-reaching importance, namely, the relationship of the All-India Moslem League—which I find you refer to on one occasion as the Lucknow League— and the London Moslem League. This is a subject which is happily wholly independent of our respective personalities, and I hope you will forgive me if I address you on the subject with some emphasis. I also hope you will not regard anything that I say as a reflection on yourself; nor I hope, will you consider anything that I may say about the work of the League in India as having any reference to myself, for I have no desire for self-laudation.

Now, I maintain that the policy of the Moslem League must be laid

down in India and nowhere else, although naturally, and rightly, it must be laid down in consultation with the London branch whenever it is possible for us to avail ourselves in time of its assistance and advice, it is only in this manner that any work can possibly be done, and I cannot see how else a practicable programme and procedure of work can be arranged. This is very different from my dictating a policy to you and I need hardly assure you that such an idea never crossed my mind.

As regards the subvention from the All-India Moslem League to the London branch, I do not see what objection you have, or can have, to my pointing out the very obvious fact that it would, be, as you say, 'in proportion to the support the latter gives to the work and projects of the Central League'. This is a matter of principle, and as such I believe, absolutely incontestable. What is more, it is a matter of fact and has to be accepted. Whether the London League has, as you say, 'cordially supported all projects which in *its* considered judgement it deemed to be for the benefit of our people', is a matter on which it would be idle for me to express an opinion. But it may be that the 'considered judgement' of the London League may differ from the 'considered judgement' of the All-India Moslem League, and I presume that in matters in which your league has not yet supported the All-India League its 'considered judgement' did differ from that of the All-India League. Here is, therefore, an opportunity which you should welcome of a discussion between, two responsible representatives of the All-India League and the London League, and I have every hope that such a discussion would result in mutual satisfaction, and that the interests of our community will therefore be promoted. However, as I have said before, everything is subject to the guiding. principle that in the last resort the opinion of the All-India Moslem League must prevail, and its policy must be laid down in conformity with the wishes of the entire community, and in India, and not according to the wishes of any individual not even of the most eminent among us, in this country.

Mr. Wazir Hasan's opinion was not the expression of his individual thoughts but stood on the firm basis of the League's Constitution. The London League forms part of 'The Organisation of the All-India Moslem League', according to section 8 of its rules. 'The London Branch of the All-India Moslem League' is declared in section 30 to be deemed to have been affiliated to the All-India Moslem League 'within the meaning of these rules', and the All-India Moslem League may, therefore, disaffiliate it under section 31. It is rules of this character that the Honorary Secretary is called upon to enforce, and under section 36 he 'shall exercise all powers and discharge all duties laid down by and incidental to the enforcing of these rules'. And yet Mr. Ameer Ali demanded that Mr. Wazir Hasan should personally acknowledge publicly that the London League was not a branch but an association independent of the All-India Moslem League and of co-ordinate status. Even if the London League may tolerate such autocracy in its office-bearers the All-India League cannot submit to it.

IX

Mr. Ameer Ali had been pressed to submit this matter for the decision of the All-India Moslem League; but instead of doing so, he commenced an intrigue with the Provincial Leagues, with the result that while the Madras League snubbed him in the most effective and dignified manner by declaring that a decision of the question lay outside its own province and only in the cognizance and jurisdiction of the parent League, the parent League was not approached even by the declared partisans of Mr. Ameer Ali. The rules of the League are therefore unchanged, and so long as they remain unchanged no other interpretation is possible than the obvious one which the Honorary Secretary has upon them. One thing, however, has happened and the President of the Agra Session, who cannot be accused of any kind of partisanship, while considering the incident of Mr. Ameer Ali's resignation as closed, made the following emphatic declaration :

> There is, however, one point in connection with the recent discussion which requires to be emphatically laid down. The London League must be regarded as a branch of the Parent League, as its very name indicated, and must work on the line of policy laid down in India. Differences of opinion must be welcomed, but differences of principles cannot be allowed. Constitutional means are open to each Branch of the League to raise questions of principle, but in that case the required procedure must be implicitly followed.

X

It is interesting to note the *Pioneer*'s comment on the final settlement of the question. 'In other words', writes our contemporary, 'the policy of the London League is to be shaped by the League in India. Mr. Ameer Ali must no longer be allowed to 'paddle his own canoe' ; he must take his orders-from the *Comrade* and Lucknow .... Having resigned rather than submit to such dictation, is he now in humble and contrite spirit going to Canossa ?' Now the *Pioneer* evidently considers itself cheated of its dues because in the first place, no shoes were hurled about at Agra where a 'second Surat' had been predicted, and not even a 'split' occurred; and in the second place because, even before the Agra session commenced, Mr. Ameer Ali thought better of the matter and withdrew his pretensions at the same time that he withdrew his resignation. Now if anything is certain, it is this that resignations no longer constitute a virtue, and few are prepared to recognise them even as a necessity. He who tenders a resignation in the belief that with its acceptance the world would come to an end is very soon likely to be taught that the world is at least as presumptuous as he, and thinks noboby to be indispensable. But whatever the general practice, we feel sure that Mr. Ameer Ali will not take his tip from the *Pioneer* and say in the spirit of defiance, *Non Canossamus.*

The joke has been tried too often, and it has now ceased to be even amusing.

> To send us wandering in search of the funeral procession by falsely announcing one's death every day !

Mr. Ameer Ali has to take orders neither from the *Comrade*, nor from Lucknow. He has to take orders from a power and it is undoubtedly a greater power to-day than it was ever before—from whose dictation no public man can pretend to be free. It is the power of the public voice, a voice that may at times be husky with excitement, or unsteady according to the influences to which it is susceptible, but which is nonetheless, sufficiently clear to-day, and which with the growth of education and enlightenment is bound to grow clearer and clearer every day. The London Branch, from its very nature cannot be treated in the same manner as Provincial Leagues. Its unequal composition makes its position one of peculiar delicacy. Financially London cannot support the All-India Moslem League and is itself far from self-supporting. For the most part the London League members are young students from whom the direction of the League's policy cannot obviously be expected. A claim, therefore, of independence or co-ordination can only be the personal claim of Mr. Ameer Ali, and as such, it means either a claim to dictatorship or a confession of impatience of all control. Now, as Mr. Jinnah explained at Bombay, in the course of his speech as Chairman of the Meeting convened under the auspices of the Zia-ul-Islam, to welcome Messrs. Wazir Hasan and Mahomed Ali back to India, 'the fact is that the Mahommedans have passed the stage of political infancy and have grown up to the stage of manhood, and therefore, can no longer be controlled by dictatorial policy from without or within; they will not obey even the semi-dictatorial policy of a few individual leaders as they did a few years ago.' But the Mussulmans are to-day as anxious as at any time previous to this to co-operate with all leaders of public opinion, and they will listen to advice from genuine well-wishers as respectfully as people who have begun to think for themselves can ever do. There is room enough in the councils of the community for men of the undoubted ability and great experience of Mr. Ameer Ali. If he is willing to co-operate with them, they will work at all times as loyal comrades.

XI

But Mr. Ameer Ali's conception of co-operation must undergo some modification before any useful work can be done. Throughout the stay of Messrs. Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali they were not even once informed of any meeting of the London League, and were subjected to considerable amount of rudeness on the only occasions on which they attended such meetings. On the last of these occasions Mr. Mohamed Ali was asked to leave the meeting; but as Mr. Wazir Hasan's presence was tolerated and His Highness the Aga Khan was pressed to attend, although both of them were as much non-

members of the London League as he, Mr. Mohamed Ali successfully insisted on taking part in the meeting. Surely Mr. Ameer Ali could not have for gotten that what he calls the Lucknow League more than once invited him to preside at its annual session, and Mr. Wazir Hasan even borrowed the sum of Rs. 6,000 which was remitted to him for the expenses of the journey. If the Secretary or a Councillor of the League took the trouble of going to London without requiring the London League to pay their expenses, could they expect to be turned out even from its meetings as non-members? Co-operation involves a bilateral consideration, and if Mr. Ameer Ali desires it the All-India Moslem League will certainly not close its doors on him. But it expects similar consideration for its own office-bearers and members, and those who desire that the two Leagues must loyally co-operate with each other should take steps to make Mr. Ameer Ali realize the full significance of co-operation.

Source: The Comrade, 10 January 1914.

34

THE MUSLIM DEPUTATION TO VICEROY—PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS

A deputation consisting of the local Mahommedans Nawab Syed Ali Khan, Nawab Syed Jafer Ali Khan, Hafiz Mahommad Halim, Mr. Mahommad Hashim, Sheikh Sana Nadim, Hafiz Ahmadullah and Mr. Yamin Ahmed, Trustees of the Machli Bazar Mosque and Syed Fazl-ur-Rahman, Secretary, District Muslim League, waited on the Viceroy on 14 October 1913 at Kanpur. Besides the members of the Deputation a large number of prominent Mussulmans including the Raja of Mahmudabad, Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq, the Hon'ble Syed Raza Ali, Hon'ble Nabiullah, Hon'ble Ross Masood were present in the Circuit House. Syed Fazl-ur-Rahman, Secretary District Muslim League, read the addreas which was presented to Viceroy by Nawab Syed Ali Khan.

THE PRESENTATION OF AN ADDRESS BY THE MUSLIM DEPUTATION TO THE VICEROY LORD HARDINGE

We, the representatives of the Muslim community, reflecting various shades of responsible Muslim opinion in India, humbly beg to approach Your Excellency on behalf of our co-religionists and ourselves with a view to lay before Your Excellency certain matters of the highest moment relating to our community. For this opportunity so graciously afforded to us by Your

Excellency we cannot but be deeply grateful. The privilege which enables the Indian subjects of His Majesty the King-Emperor to wait in deputation upon his representative on occasions of importance is highly prized and is, we venture to think, of inestimable value in the special circumstances of the governance of India.

As your Excellency is aware, the political activity of our community in recent years took its initial impulse from the great Deputation that waited in 1906 at Simla upon Your Excellency's predecessor, Lord Minto, whose recent sad death we, along with the rest of the people of India, so deeply mourn. The extended opportunities for participating in public affairs which the liberal policy of the Government was then creating for the people of this country had brought home to the Mussulmans the imperative necessity of organising themselves for effective and fruitful co-operation with Government and with other communities. Responding to the call of such a generous policy on the part of Government, the Mussulmans succeeded in a great measure in drawing together and organising their social and political forces in an incredibly short space of time, and as a prominent instance we may quote the establishment of the All-India Moslem League, which has ever since continued to be the true representative organization of Indian Mussulmans. The latent vitality of our community began to manifest itself soon after and marked the new era of an awakened consciousness. Along with an earnest desire to take their full share in the responsibilities of civic life, the Mussulmans of India realised even more vividly than ever that their future progress depended chiefly upon the energy and vigour with which they undertook the task of carrying out the educational policy formulated by their greatest leader, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, more than three decades ago.

Your Excellency, we may with pardonable pride here refer to the unprecedented promptitude with which the community met and overcame the financial difficulties that stood in the way of the grant of a Charter for the establishment of a University of our own. In this connection it will not be perhaps out of place to mention that the extremely arduous and constructive work of elaborating a Constitution for the Muslim University was taken up by the community with earnestness and zeal, and the result leads up to hope that, whenever required, willing and competent workers will be readily forthcoming. That long cherished desire, however, for the establishment of the Moslem University still remains unfulfilled.

Before we could secure the result of our labours in this connection events of unparalleled magnitude and absorbing interest to Mussulmans followed one another in a rapid and bewildering succession. Your Excellency, it could not have been expected that they would fail to make a deep and painful impression upon the Mussulmans of this country. It must be apparent to all observers that the combination of such unfortunate events as then occurred was absolutely unprecedented, and the Mussulmans of India were face to face with a wholly abnormal situation. Your Excellency whose great sympathy was with us through-

out our protracted sufferings, is well aware of the intensity and pognance of our fellings in that dark hour. But no one can point to a single incident suggesting, however remotely, that the Mussulmans of India had lost their sanity of judgment and self-restraint during a period of unusual gravity, or that they had departed even by a hair's breadth from the tradition of staunch and unwavering loyalty to the British Throne and to His Majesty's Government established by law in India.

Despite these undeniable facts, we have noticed with deep pain and resentment a series of deplorable attempts that have recently been made in certain quarters to vilify our community misrepresent our attitude towards Government, and cast unmerited aspersions on the character and motives of whole classes of His Majesty's Muslim subjects with a view to discredit them in the eyes of Government and of their British fellow-subjects. It has been openly declared that leaders of the Muslim community inflame religious passions, promote racial antagonism and lose no opportunity of abusing British Rule and vilifying the Christian religion, and that a new party already begins to dream of expelling the British from India. It has also been stated that a sinister feature of this new Muslim movement is that Aligarh graduates are in the van and are openly preaching hostility to British Rule, and that attempts are being made to tamper with the loyalty of Muslim troops.

Your Excellency, after having stood the repeated test of actual experience it times of great public excitement, we never expected such cruel attacks at a time when we were under the shadow of a great calamity and needed all the sympathy and goodwill to which we were entitled. Your Excellency will, we trust, pardon us for any warmth of language into which we may be betrayed in repudiating such wicked libels on the fair name of seventy millions of His Majesty's loyal Muslim subjects in India. We, on behalf of our community and ourselves, unhesitatingly characterise these allegations as gross and baseless calumnies opposed in the highest degree to the best interests of the Empire. In ordinary circumstances irresponsible attacks on communities, as on individuals, may be treated with the silence of contempt. But those who have taken upon themselves the task of maligning our community are both persistent and resourceful, and their sinister efforts have been assisted by the wide publicity given to their allegations in England as well as in this country. We, therefore, apprehended that, unless some opportunity such as this was afforded to us, it was not possible for a community circumstanced as ours to give such allegations an effectual, authoritative and adequate contradiction.

Your Excellency, our grievances of a character such as in ordinary practice form the subject matter of deputations. But there is nothing that we prize more highly than the recognition of our loyalty, and it is with reference to this that we have craved Your Excellency's leave to approach you. We avail ourselves of this opportunity to declare with all the emphasis that we can commend that Indian Mussulmans cherish this tradition no less dearly to-day than they did at any time previously in their history.

Your Excellency will, we trust, accept our assurance that we desire nothing better than this, that absolute confidence should exist between the people and the Government, and that friendlist feelings should prevail between the various communities of India; but it has pained us greatly that sinister motives should be ascribed in some quarters to the efforts that are being made to make the relations between the two great sister communities of India more harmonious and friendly.

Your Excellency has endeared yourself to the whole of India by your large-hearted sympathy with the people of this country, your generous appreciation of their aspirations and the high statesmanship which has characterised your rule. Grateful as we are for the benefits that have resulted from your liberal and progressive administration in which we have participated with the rest of India, we have special reason to offer our respectful gratitude to Your Excellency for the unfailing consideration that you have shown for the feelings and sentiments of our community, and for the policy of Your Excellency Government with regard to our educational requirements of which we hope to see an early fruition. It is, therefore, a matter of special pleasure to us to approach Your Excellency with this our humble address conveying to Your Excellency our heartfelt assurances of the continued and unimpeachable loyalty of the community we represent, and we trust Your Excellency will be pleased to communicate these assurances to His Majesty the King-Emperor.

SIGNATORIES TO THE ADDRESS

1. Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Khan Saheb, C.S.I. of Maler Kotla (Formerly Member of the Imperial Legislative Council.)
2. Dr. Naziruddin Hasan, M.A. (Cantab), LL.D. (Dublin), Bar-at-Law, Lucknow.
3. The Hon. Raja Sir Mohamed Ali Mohamed Khan Bahadur K.C.I.E., of Mahmudabad.
4. Haji Mohamed Musa Khan Saheb of Datauli, Aligarh.
5. Munshi Mohamed Ehtesham Ali Saheb of Lucknow.
6. Prince Ghulam Mohamed, Ex-Sheriff of Calcutta (Mysore Family).
7. Aga Syed Husain Saheb Shustari of Calcutta.
8. Prince Afsar-ul-Mulk Akram Husain, Calcutta (Oudh Royal Family).
9. Prince Ahmed Halim-uz-Zaman, Calcutta (Mysore Family).
10. Haji Bakhsh Ellahi Khan Saheb, C.I.E., Delhi.
11. Shafa-ul-Mulk Hakim Raziuddin Khan Saheb, Delhi.
12. The Hon. Captain Malik Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, C.I.E.
13. Mufti Fida Mohamed Khan, Bar-at-Law, Peshawar.
14. Mazharul Haque Esq., Bar-at-Law, Bankipore (Formerly Member of the Imperial Legislative Council).
15. Mohamed Azhar Ali Esq., B.A., Vakil, Hon. Joint Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, Lucknow.
16. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, B.A., M.S., M.D. (Edin), M.R.C.S.,

L.R.C.P. (Lond.), Delhi.

17. Khan Bahadur Allah Bakhsh Saheb, Retired Political Assistant of Lahore.
18. Captain Nawab Ahmed Nawaz Khan Sadozai, Dera Ismail Khan.
19. Nawab Abdul Majid Saheb, C.I.E. Bar-at-Law, Allahabad (Formerly Member of the Imperial Legislative Council).
20. The Hon. Khan Bahadur Khwaja Yusuf Shah, Amritsar.
21. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Ghulam Sadiq Saheb, Amritsar.
22. Syed Abdur Rashid, B.A., LL.B., Hon. Secretary, Provincial Muslim League, Ajmere.
23. The Hon. Mr. Ghulam Husain, B.A., LL. B., Hyderabad (Sind).
24. Haji Usuf Haji Ismail Sobhani, President Anjuman-i-Islam, Bombay.
25. Moulvi Syed Abul-Aas Saheb, Honorary Magistrate, Patna.
26. Khan Bahadur Nawab Sarfaraz Hosain, Khan Saheb (Formerly Member of the Provincial Legislative Council) Patna.
27. Mohamed Ali Tyebji Kaderbhoy, Esq., Bar-at-Law, President, Anjuman-i-Zia-ul-Islam, Bombay.
28. Shaikh Mohamed Faeq Saheb, B.A., LL.B., Fyzabad.
29. Hafiz Mohamed Abdul Halim Saheb, Cawnpore.
30. Syed Fazlur Rahman Saheb, B.A., LL.B., Cawnpore.
31. Mohamed Ali Esq., B.A. (Oxon.), Editor of *The Comrade* and *The Hamdard*, Delhi.
32. The Hon. Khan Bahadur Mir Asad Ali, Madras.
33. The Hon. Syed Qamarul Huda, Bar-at-Law, Bakhtiarpore, Patna.
34. Mohamed Ali Jinnah, Esq., Bar-at-Law (Formerly Member of the Imperial Legislative Counci), Bombay.
35. Shaukat Ali Esq., Mo'tamid-i-Khadim-ul-Khuddam-i-Kaba, Delhi.
36. Maulvi Habibur Rahman Khan Saheb Sherwani, Aligarh.
37. Sahebzada Aftab Ahmed Khan Esq., Bar-at-Law, Aligarh (Formerly Member of the Provincial Legislative Council).
38. Shaikh Abdullah Esq., B.A., LL.B., Aligarh.
39. Khan Bahadur Maulvi Maqbool Alum Saheb, Vakil, Benares.
40. Tasadduq Ahmed Khan Esq., Bar-at-Law, Aligarh.
41. The Hon. Mr. G.M. Bhurguri, Bar-at-Law, Sindh.
42. M. Abdul Aziz Esq., Bar-at-Law, President N.W.F.P. Muslim League, Peshawar.
43. Shams-ul-Ulama Moulvi Shibli Saheb Nomani.
44. Maulvi Gholam Haider Khan Saheb of the *Zamindar*, Lahore.
45. Nawab Mohamed Jafar Ali Khan Saheb of Shish Mahal, Lucknow.
46. Nawabzada Mohamed Syed Ali Khan Saheb, B.A., Shish Mahal, Lucknow.
47. Maulana Maulvi Abdul Bari Saheb, Firangi Mahal, Lucknow.
48. Moulvi Gholam Mohiy-ud-din Saheb of Kasur, Pleader, Punjab.
49. Khan Bahadur Shams-ul-Ulama Maulana Abul Khair Saheb, Ghazipur.

50. Masudul Hasan Esq., Bar-at-Law, Moradabad.
51. The Hon. Maulvi Syed Mohamed Tahir Saheb, Vakil, Monghyr.
52. Chawdhry Mohamed Ajirul Haque Saheb, Bakhtiarpore, Monghyr.
53. Maulvi Shaikh Kamal-ud-din Ahmad Sahab, Zamindar Mushkipore, Monghyr.
54. Shaikh Zahur Ahmad Esq., Bar-at-Law, Allahabad,
55. Khan Saheb Maulvi Bashir Ali Khan Saheb, Hony. Secretary Anjuman-i-Himayet-i-Islam, Lahore.
56. Nawab Mohamed Ali Khan Saheb Qazilbash of Lahore.
57. Abdul Majid Khwaja Esq., B.A. (Cantab), Bar-at-Law, Aligarh.
58. Syed Ali Abbas Bokhari, Esq., Hon. Secretary, Provincial Muslim League, Peshawar.
59. The Hon. Nawab Mohamed Ibrahim Ali Khan Saheb, Kunjjpura, Punjab.
60. Syed Zahur Ahmed Esq., B.A., LL.B., Joint Secretary, U.P. Provincial Muslim League, Lucknow.
61. Syed Abdul Aziz, Esq., Bar-at-Law, Bankipore.
62. Khan Bahadur, Syed Ali Hasan Khan, Saheb, Retired Member of the Council of Indore State, Ex-Prime Minister of Jaora State.
63. Syed Wazir Hasan, Esq., B.A., LL.B., Hon. Secretary, All-India Muslim League, Lucknow.
64. Ahsanul Haque, Esq., Bar-at-Law, Jullunder.
65. Maulvi Mahboob Alum Saheb, Editor of *The Paisa-Akhbar*, Lahore.
66. Maulvi Mohamed Yaqub Saheb, Vakil, Moradabad.
67. Khan Bahadur Maulana H.M. Malak Saheb, President, C.P. Muslim League, Nagpore.
68. The Hon. Mr. Abdulhusain Adamji Peerbhoy, J.P. Bombay.
69. Haziq-ul-Mulk Hakim Hafiz Ajmal Khan Saheb, Delhi.
70. Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami, M.D., D.PH., I.M.S., Retired.
71. Khwaja Gul Mohamed Khan, Pleader, Punjab.
72. The Hon. Sir Fazalbhoy Currimbhoy Ebrahim, K.C.I.M., Bombay.
73. The Hon. Raja Syed Abu Jafar Saheb of Pirpur, Fyzabad.
74. The Hon. Khan Bahadur Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhry, of Dhanbari, District Mymensingh, Bengal.
75. The Hon. Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoolla, Kt., Bombay.
76. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Wahid-ud-din Saheb of Meerut.
77. Syed Alay Mohamed Esq., Bar-at-Law, Retired Deputy Commissioner, Lucknow.
78. Maulana Syed Karamat Husain Saheb, Bar-at-Law, Ex. Judge, High Court, N.W.P. Lucknow.
79. The Hon. Shaikh Shahid Husain, B.A., LL.B. (Cantab), Bar-at-Law, Lucknow, Taluqdar of Gadia.
80. Nawab Mohamed Ishaq Khan Saheb, Hon. Secretary to the Board of Trustees of the M.A.O. College, Aligarh.

81. Shams-ul-Ulama Syed Ahmed Saheb, Imam Jami' Musjid, Delhi.
82. Qazi Najm-ud-din Ahmed Saheb, Meerut.
83. R.M. Ghulam Husain Esq., B.A., Sub-Editor of *The Comrade*, Delhi.
84. Maulana Khwaja Hasan Nizami, Delhi.

H.E. THE VICEROY's REPLY

It is a source of much pleasure to me to have this opportunity of receiving a deputation of the Mahommedan community of such a representative character as that which I have the pleasure of seeing here before me today.

You have referred, in the address which I am very happy to receive from you, to the reinvigorated vitality of your own community during the past few years, and it is a fact to which I am able to bear testimony and at the same time to welcome. There is no doubt that in India, during the past 40 years a great change has swept over Islam in India, but zeal for the Moslem faith and for the uplifting of the community, and the loyalty of the Moslems to the Government of this country where they live and find freedom of worship, have gone hand in hand, and have created a high ideal from which the community has never wavered. This indeed was the policy advocated by the last Sir Syed Ahmed, the distinguished reformer and leader of the Indian Mahommedan community, and I can only state my firm conviction that in pursuing that policy the true salvation of the Mahommedans of India is to be found. It is a policy worthy of the community of political and social importance such as your's. There is no doubt that Mahommedan sentiment has been greatly stirred by recent events outside India, and that for a time a restless spirit prevailed which might have been interpreted by those who regarded merely the troubled surface of the water as a dangerous portent but which those who could see below the surface were well aware, betrayed no real antagonism between government and your community. It is true that feelings have been sore, and that here and there this has found expression in bitter or heated words, which it would have been better to have left unsaid. And it is true, unfortunately, that writers in the English and foreign press have been misled by such expressions and, owing to a merely superficial comprehension of the Mahommedan train of thought, have misrepresented the attitude of your community and attributed to them actions and thoughts which those who know you well can only regard as a deep misunderstanding. I can well sympathise with your feelings of resentment at aspersions that have been cast upon you and your people as a whole, but I can only assure you that I and my Government have never doubted the unswerving loyalty which we know quite well to be one of the noblest and most sacred of your community. I need hardly repeat to you here what I said in the Legislative Council at Simla on the 17th September last to the realisation by the British Government of the absolute necessity for the maintenance of the status quo as regards the Holy Places in Arabia, but I would point out that this is an important and powerful link

between your community and the Government of our King-Emperor, for it is only in view of the religious interests of the Mahommedans of India and the value that the Government attach to religious freedom and Mahommedan control of the Holy Places that such a responsibility could rest upon Great Britain. Now that peace has been happily restored in Europe and Asia, I look forward with hope and confidence to a period of peaceful development of the Mahommedan community by means of self improvement and education, and to a policy of solidarity and co-operation with Government of all loyal, moderate and sober opinion for the welfare and progress of their Empire which we all of us have so much at heart.

In conclusion I thank you very warmly for the friendly tone of your personal references to myself and the policy that I have tried to follow. I cordially welcome the assurance that you have given me of the continued and unimpeachable loyalty of the community which you represent which I will not fail to transmit to the King Emperor, although for me such assurances were not needed, and I devoutly hope that the pure and unalloyed faith of your people in the unity of God and of loyalty to their rulers may burn like a flame and ever grow brighter to lighten your path for many ages to come.

Source : The Comrade, 17 March 1914.

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THE COMRADE ON THE MUSLIM DEPUTATION TO THE VICEROY

The freedom that His Majesty's Indian subjects enjoy of bringing in a formal manner and collectively to the notice of the representative of the Crown in this country their hopes and fears, their gratitute and grievances is a privilege of inestimable value in the special circumstances of the governance of India. No doubt such a privilege must be exercised with a due sense of responsibility and we think it will be agreed that Indian Mussulmans have approached the Governor-General only when the importance and the urgency of the occasion have dictated such a course.

Now that the Mussulmans are once more approaching H.E. the Viceroy in a deputation it is not unprofitable to recall the circumstances when such a necessity arose and a deputation of Muslim representatives from every part of India waited on the late Earl of Minto at Simla on the 1st of October, 1906. It is difficult to exaggerate the debt which the Indian Mussulmans owe to the memory of one of their foremost leaders, the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who realized the importance to his community of the new political situation that

was just emerging into shape at the time and in collaboration with some of the leading Mussulmans organised the memorable Simla deputation. The need for such a step on the part of Mussulmans had grown urgent in the circumstances of the day. India was entering on a new era of political development and advance. Western education had been progressing at a steady pace for upward of two generations, and its natural and inevitable results were beginning to manifest themselves in the broadened outlook, greater social activity and new political hopes and aspirations of the people. Their demand for a steadily increasing share in the administration of the country had become more vocal and persistent, and those responsible for the good government of India were, with their sure national instincts, beginning to perceive the undesirability of delaying the political satisfaction of a demand which was gaining every day in cogency and strength. Unfortunately this travail of a new birth was attended with horrors that heralded a new and sinister movement not only foreign to India but also alien to the spirit of constitutional advance permeating her educated classes. Lord Morley's advent at the India Office happened to synchronise with a period of grave unrest in parts of the country which made the direction of Indian affairs an exceptionally heavy and anxious charge. But it is a remarkable fact in British political history that the hour has always called forth the man. The situation in India at the time was met by Lords Morley and Minto with statesmanship of a rare order, and while the tide of anarchical crime was stemmed by the application of drastic measures, was described as 'healthy unrest' was dealt with in a wholly different spirit. The attitude and policy of Government were defined in terms of generous breath and wisdom and the task of governance was informed with a now spirit of courage and sympathy.

While a general wave of expectancy swept over the land and portents of organic changes in the machinery of Indian administration loomed above the horizon, the Indian Mussulmans also awoke to a fuller understanding of their own political situation. The prospect of important reforms designed to give to the Indian people a much larger voice in the administration of the affairs of their country could not but be gratifying to Indian Mussulmans, but could not also fail to arouse certain very natural apprehensions in their minds. Changes of such scope and character as were contemplated were to sow the seeds of constitutional development for the future of India, but the Mussulmans felt that the seed would grow into a vigorous tree and bear fruit only if due consideration was show to the nature of the soil also.. So long as the difference of creed, and all the differences that it involves in culture, social institutions and outlook, kept the Indian races distinct and separate, and so long as they lacked the vital impulse of a common patriotism urging them to address themselves unitedly and without communal bias to common secular tasks, so long would the Mussulmans have reasons to fear that in the absence of effective safeguards all new constitutional experiments tending towards the establishment of government by majority are likely to end in disaster. It was apprehen-

sions such as these that took the Mussulmans in deputation to Simla in 1906. Lord Minto, to whom the Mussulmans can never be too grateful, and to whom the country as a whole owes not a few of its vitalising influences, recognised the justice of the Muslim attitude and accepted the principle of communal representation as the only suitable basis for representative institutions because the Muslim Deputation in 1906 was a distinct landmark in the political history of Indian Mussulmans under British Rule, and recent Muslim activities owe to it their initial impulse. The generous policy of Government made it imperative for the Mussulmans to organise their forces with a view to co-operate with Government and with other communities in the common task of working for Indian progress. The earlier attitude of a resigned passivity would have made the community the sport of change in the stress of the new political conditions. Government itself could no longer champion the Muslim cause without serious apprehensions of being suspected of partiality. These were the considerations that eventually led to the establishment of the All-India Muslim League which is and has always been the true representative of Indian Mussulmans and their only comprehensive political organisation.

The latent vitality of the community has been manifesting itself since the epoch-making Deputation of 1906 in all directions. Along with a keen appreciation of their political interests and an earnest desire to take their full share in the responsibilities of civic life, the Mussulmans of India realized even more vividly than ever that their salvation lay in devoting themselves whole-heartedly to the task of self-improvement through education suited to their peculiar needs and conditions. Within a year of the establishment of the reformed Councils they galvanised the scheme of the Muslim University, and all financial demands that were made by those who had to satisfy themselves that the proposed University was sufficiently well-endowed to be able to carry on its great work were met by the Mussulmans with an unprecedented and, in fact, unexpected promptitude. A no less important work, namely, the elaboration of a Constitution for the Muslim University, was undertaken in right earnest, and those who believe, or at least pretend to believe, that the present generation of Indian Mussulmans is capable of destructive criticism only will find it impossible to reconcile with this accusation the constructive work done by the community in this connection. Whenever required willing and competent workers were forthcoming, and neither time nor labour was grudged. Although it is impossible to forget that a good deal yet remains to be done, we hope, we are justified in thinking that the prospect before the Mussulmans of India is far from discouraging. Unfortunately, however, the Secretary of State intervened at the eleventh hour, upsetting all plans and disconcerting the Government of India as well as the Muslim community, and the long-cherished desire of the Mussulmans for establishing a Muslim University still remains unfulfilled.

While the Mussulmans were still busy in planning their University, events of unparalleled magnitude and far-reaching importance followed one another

with bewildering rapidity. Some of them were peculiarly Indian and concerned the Mussulmans of India directly, while others, although they occurred abroad, powerfully reacted throughout the Muslim World. First, in chronological order came the intrigues of France and Spain in the country of the Moors, the tradition of whose conquest and domination over Spain, lasting as it did for many centuries, is a memory which could not be effected from the mind of any Muslim that takes pride in the culture associated with his faith. Close on the heels of these sad events in Morocco came the unprovoked raid of Italy on an outlying province of the Ottoman Empire in the same continent, and it was not to be expected that the Mussulmans of any part of the world would remain unmoved by the tale of horrors perpetrated in the oasis of Tripoli. After the French conquest of Algiers and occupation of Tunis, and the British occupation of Egypt, Tripoli and Morocco were the only countries in Africa under effective Moslem dominatior, and on its disappearance the Mussulmans of the world could not fail to experience deep and sustained grief not accompained by anxiety and alarm.

Affairs in an other part of the Muslim World, vith which Indian Mussulmans were still more intimately concerned, had for sometime past worn a disquieting appearances, and before the year 1911 came to an end, the Persian crisis had become dangerously acute. Although Arabia is to the Mussulmans a land the santity of which no part of the world can equal, Persian can rightly claim to be almost in an equal degree the cradle of their culture, literary grace and artistic refinement. Her poets have in inumerable instances kindled inspiration in those of Indian Mussulmans and her philosophers and mystics have stimulated in only too many cases the thoughts of their best thinkers. Even the ethics of the Mussulmans, based as it is, on their Holy Scriptures, has often come to the Mussulmans of India through the moralists of Persia, while it must be manifest even to a superficial student of the language of their daily intercourse throughout India which they cherish so dearly that its poetic imagery, its fund of allusions, its many happy turns of expression and a considerable part of its vocabulary have been directly derived from the land of Hafiz and S'adi and Omar the Tent-maker. Naturally enough, Indian Musslumans could not contemplate the passing of Persia with equanimity, and when to the sad fate of her newly awakened poltical consciousness were added the unspeakable horrors of the hanging of some of her divines and the wanton outrage perpetrated at the shrine of Iman Riza at Holy Meshed, it was inevitable that a wave of indignation should sweep over the entire community.

About the same time His Majesty the King-Emperor announced at his Imperial Darbar certain momentous changes in India itself, one of which, namely, the modification of the patition of Bengal, was received by the Mussulmans with considerable dissaisfaction. The fact that this announcement was made by His Majesty himself and that the promise of a gradual evolution of provincial autonomy was distinctly held out in the Despatch of the Government of India recommending the Darbar changes, reconciled the

Mussulmans to them and they have no desire to re-open the settlement even though it was itself the result of the modification of a prior settlement. We only mention it in this connection because, coming as it did in the midst of the troubles of Indian Mussulmans it could not but add to their distractions.

Just when things seems to be settling down, there broke out in the Balkans with no less abruptness perhaps the bloodiest war that has yet been recorded in the annals of the world. So far as we know, there is no haven or creek, however remote and sequestered, that has remained immune from the ravages wrought by a tidal wave of anguish and indignation due to the sanguinary storm that raged in the Balkans. While bearing the amplest testimony to the wisdom and sagacity of His Excellency the Viceroy, who realized the intensity and poignance of the feelings of Indian Mussulmans at the time and showed his sympathy with them in many ways, we must say that the speeches of His Majesty's Ministers in England appeared to the Mussulmans to be not only lacking in sympathy with their sorrow but also unfeeling *if not* wantonly provocative. The foreign policy of Sir Edward Grey again appeared to be guided less by a desire to satisfy Indian Mussulmans than to please Russia and in fact submissively follow her wherever she led. We do not ignore the international commitments of England when we say that Sir Edward Grey seemed to have ignored her imperial responsibilities. Horror and indignaton at the cruel spoilation of Moslem kingdoms and states was sufficient to create excitement among the Mussulmans in this country, but dangerous feeling might have been roused by a suspicion that instead of being a friendly advocate of Turkey and other Moslem states in the councils of Europe, England was unjustly sding with their enemies. Whether such feelings would have been natural or not can be judged best if we recall to mind what Lord Morley said in 1909 on the subject of the international position of the India Mussulmans in reply to a deputation of the London branch of the All-India Moslem League that waited on his Lordship in connection with the projected Council Reforms. Speaking with all the authority of a Minister of His Majesty responsible for the good government of India, Lord Morley said on that occasion : 'I know very wel that any injustice, any suspicion that we were capable of being unjust to Mahommedans in India, would certainly provoke a severe and injurious reaction in Constantinople.' It therefore follows only too clearly that any injutice or any suspicion that His Majesty's Government was capable of being unjust to Turkey must naturally provoke a severe and injurious reaction amongthe Mahommedans of India. Whatever criticism was levelled at Sir Edward Grey and the British foreign policy during the last three years was not inspired by the belief that His Majesty's Government was guilty of wanton injustice to Turkey or any other Muslims country, nor that responsible Muslim opinion ignored the well known fact that Lord Hardinge invariably used a restraining influence whenever events in Persia provided a plausible reason for the focible intervention of Great Britain. Indian Mussulmans were also aware of thefact, and were deeply grateful for it,

that His Excellency availed himself to the full of every opportunity that presented itself during the recent troubles of Turkey to represent to His Majesty's Government the feelings, hopes and fears of Indian Mussulmans and to be friend their Turkish brethren. What the Indian Mussulmans felt and desired was that still greater friendliness should be shown by His Majesty's Government towards the Ottoman Empire and that a settlement should be effected whereby their unimpeachable territorial loyalty should run in the same direction as their unmistakable extra-territorial patriotism. Lord Curzon, who cannot be accused of any desire to seduce Indian Mussulmans from their loyalty to His Majesty the King-emperor, voiced their feelings when speaking towards the end of *1911*, at the banquet of the Persia Society, he was reported to have said that 'the Mahommedan countries of the world were fully entitled to the benefit of the law of nations and with them treaties ought to be kept. When they sought their own salvation, we ought to give them all assistance. The loyalty and contentment of the Muslims was one of the strongest things of our rule in India, so we would like the Muslims of the world to feel that in England they had their truest friend, who was prepared to make every effort and to make a sacrifice on their behalf.'

We have no desire to dwell any longer on painful topics such as the horrors perpetrated in Persia, Tripoli, and the Balkans, but we desire to emphasise the fact that not unoften things which may appear strange in Christendom are the accepted truths of the Muslim World. One of these is the fact that Mussulmans willingly share the joys and sorrows of their co-religionists although they may differ from one another in language, race and country and, in fact, in everything that goes in the West to constitute nationality. Islam is the greatest solvent of linguistic, geographical and ethnic differences, and however much one may desire to substitute a secular basis of nationality, he is bound to admit that as things are at présent and so long as the Muslim believes in Islam, his creed provides and will continue to provide for him all the cohesion that language, country and race provide for Western nations.

That being so, was it strange that the troubles of Mussulmans abroad should have had a powerful reaction among the Mahommedans of India as in other parts of the world ? The situation was wholly abnormal and, as an important English official interested in the Mussulmans of India said, they had some reason even to be unreasonable. But we defy even the most captions critic of the Moslem community to point to a single incident throughout the protracted sufferings of Indian Mussulmans suggesting, however remotely, that they had departed even by hair's breadth from the tradition of staunch and unwavering loyalty to the British Throne and to His Majesty's Government established by law in India. We challenge anyone to place his finger on any record of wanton disregard of law and breach of public peace by any section of the Mussulmans of India even during the period of their greatest misery. This historic community has been noted for its sanity of judgment

and self-restraint during periods of unusual gravity, and we do not think it lost these characteristic qualities at any time during the troubles of the last three years. There is nothing in its record of which it need be ashamed, and we say this not by way of apology but as a full justification of its attitude throughout its protracted sufferings.

II

Last week we had dealt with the various events that had sorely tried the temper of Indian Mussulmans and had challenged any one to point to a single incident throughout their protracted sufferings suggesting, however remotely, that they had departed even by a hair's breadth from the traditions of staunch and unwavering loyalty, or to place his finger on any record of wanton disregard of law and breach of public peace by any section of the Mussulmans of India even during the period of their greatest misery. We had declared that this historic community, noted for its sanity, had not lost these characteristic qualities at any time during its recent troubles, and that in short there was nothing in its recent record of which it need be ashamed.

Despite these undeniable facts, however, a series of vile attempts had recently been made in certain Anglo-Indian quarters to misrepresent the attitude of the Mussulmans towards Government and to discredit them in the eyes of Government and of the British public. We need not refer here in detail to these wicked libels as we have had on more than one occasion since last summer to refute them, and our readers can easily recall the articles that appeared in the *Times* and in the *National Review* and our rejoinders to them. But it had now become clear that those who had taken upon themselves the task of maligning the Indian Mussulmans were both persistent and resourceful, and the unscrupulous manners in which some organs of the British Press for obvious reasons lent themselves to this evil propaganda made it necessary that the repudiation of such calumnies should not be left to a single newspaper, no matter how representative, but should be undertaken by a Deputation of a very comprehensive character which should reflect every shade of Muslim opinion in India.

This project was discussed by the Hon. the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad with some prominent Mussulmans who were then at Delhi, and was referred to some others who were invited to Delhi for the purpose by the Hon. the Raja Saheb. The project met with general approval among those who could be consulted at that early stage, and encouraged by this response the Raja Saheb consulted some more prominent members of the community, and when their assent was obtained, a long and comprehensive list more than 200 Mussulmans, representating all provinces and every shade of Muslim opinion, was prepared in consultation with many prominent members of the community and letters were despatched to them inviting their co-operation. The object of the Deputation war clearly explained in the letter, and soon

after several rough drafts of the proposed address were despatched to the gentlemen who had been invited to join the Deputation. Unfortunately the interval for organising the Deputation was extremely short, but it is a noteworthy fact that men of all reorganised shades of opinion agreed to the project and showed their willingness to co-operate with each other in this matter and the general framework of the address was universally approved. On the 22nd and 23rd instant, the Address was fully discussed and finally approved. The list of the signatories to the address is remarkably comprehensive, even though many prominent Mussulmans who heartily approved of the Deputation and had given their assent to the general framework and tone of the address were unavoidably absent. Nevertheless the eightyfour Mussulmans who signed the address and who were received by H.E. the Viceroy on the 25th instant were fully representative of the community and well qualified to speak in its name.

The address, which we reproduced last week very closely followed the views we expressed in our last articles on the subject of the Muslim Deputation, and it seems needless to dwell on it any further. Turning to the reply of H.E. the Viceroy, we note that it deals in the first place with what the address of the Mussulmans called 'the new era of an awakened consciousness'. In the next place, it deals with the reaction in India of the 'events of unparalleled magnitude and absorbing interest to the Mussulmans', which, in the words of the address 'followed one another in a rapid and bewildering succession'. In the third place, it deals with the charges that had been levelled with such rancour and persistence against the Mussulmans for more than half a year in some sections of the British and the Anglo-Indian Press. In the next place, it deals, with question of the Holy Places in Arabia, and, finally, with the improved outlook for the future.

The address of the Muslim Deputation had referred with significant prominence to the All-India Muslim League, which, according to the Deputation 'has ever since its establishment continued to be the true representative organisation of Indian Mussulmans.' We are glad that so comprehensive a Deputation expressed itself in such clear terms and with such emphasis about the All-India Muslim League, for although the matter is too obvious, attempts have not been wanting to create misunderstandings as regards the scope and character of the Muslim League since its acceptance of the ideal of self-government suited to India.

In this connection it may be stated that no progressive institution or country can stand exactly where it did some years ago, and thanks to the progressive character of British rule in India, the changes which are taking place from day to day in this country make it difficult for India to remain stationary in its policies and ideals. Even in 1906, Lord Minto told the Simla Deputation that it had addressed him 'at a time when the political atmosphere is full of change'. 'We all feel it,' said Lord Minto, 'It would be foolish to attempt to deny its existence. Hopes and ambitions new to India

are making themselves felt. We cannot ignore them. We should be wrong to wish to do so. But to what is all this unrest due ? Not to the discontent of misgoverned millions, I defy anyone honestly to assert that; not to any uprising of a disaffected people; it is due to that educational growth in which only a very small portion of the population has as yet shared, of which British rule first sowed the seed and the fruits, of which British rule is now doing its best to foster and to direct.' It would have been a poor recognition of the progressive character of the present regime to suggest that the new hopes and ambitions which were then making themselves felt had now ceased to vitalise the people of this country. Even in the short space of time since Lord Hardinge took up the reins of office, education financed much more generously than before, has been able to move with great strides, and every day an increasingly large harvest is being gathered from the vast fields wherein British rule had sown the seed. The atmosphere is still full of change and even the Mussulmans, who seemed to have been tied to the spot by ancient traditions and more recent intellectual poverty, are now beginning to become more and more susceptible to the changes of the political weather. In the words of Lord Minto, it would be foolish to deny the existence of an atmosphere full of change, and we should be wrong to wish to do so. The new voyage of political discovery on which the Mussulmans set out in 1906 has necessitated a revision of their political charts. The recent activities of the Muslim League simply mean a much-needed defining of the direction where it was comparative vagueness and uncertainty before. As the attainment of the ideal of self-government depends not upon any drastic changes in the system of administration almost amounting to a revolution, but on the slow growth and evolution of a nationality based upon the co-ordination of and harmony and goodwill prevailing among the various communities of India, the All-India Moslem League has rightly held out the hand of friendship towards the great sister community of Hindus. But sinister motives were ascribed even to this, although the Mussulmans had only just commenced to practise what the officials had preached so often before. This the Mussulmans naturally resented very deeply. In his reply to the address the Viceroy was able to say : 'You have referred in the address, which I am very happy to receive from you, to the re-invigorated vitality of your community during the past few years, and it is a fact to which I am able to bear testimony and at the same time to *welcome*.' His Excellency added that 'zeal for the Moslem faith and for the uplifting of the community and the loyalty of the Muslims to the Government of this country, where they live and find freedom of worship, have gone hand in hand, and have created a high ideal from which the community has never wavered.' This is a testimony which should easily sweep away all the cobwebs of suspicions and sinister surmises woven with a crafty malice by the calumniators of Indian Mussulmans.

As regards the reaction in India of a bewildering succession of events to

which the address referred, His Excellency the Viceroy was equally emphatic when he said that, although Muslim sentiment had been greatly stirred, and for a time a restless spirit prevailed, there was no real antagonism between the Government and the Muslim community. The charges that the leaders of the Muslim community inflamed religious passions, promoted national antagonism and lost no opportunity of abusing British rule and vilifying the Christian religion, that a new party had already begun to dream of expelling the British from India, that Aligarh graduates were in the van openly preaching hostility to British rule, and that attempts were being made to tamper with the loyalty of Muslim troops were condemned by His Excellency the Viceroy as clearly as they deserved to be. According to His Excellency writers in the Press had 'misrepresented the attitude of your community and attributed to them actions and thoughts which those who know you well can only regard as a deep misunderstanding'. After all, the Mussulmans must take into consideration the limitations of the phraseology suited to the pronouncements of His Majesty's representative in his Indian Empire, and must treat the phrase 'a deep misunderstanding' as a synonym for Mr. Churchill's 'terminological inexactitude' and Mr. Kipling's 'unmitigated-misstatement'. Their consolation must, however, be that lies are lies and stink in the nostril just as much in whatever phraseology we may clothe them. It is sheer charity, however, to suggest, as His Excellency had done, that these writers were misled by the troubled surface of the water and gave currency to such foul libels merely on account of 'superficial comprehension of the Mahommedan train of thought'. No doubt, His Excellency was not called upon to sit in judgment upon these men, and it was enough for His Excellency's purpose to indicate clearly that their charges were false. But if His Excellency had been sitting as a judge upon them, we have no doubt he would have also found them guilty of malicious conspiracy. The deputation had said that 'after having stood the repeated test of actual experience in times of great public excitement we never expected such cruel attacks at a time when we were under the shadow of a great calamity and needed all the sympathy and goodwill to which we were entitled.' The Viceroy, to whose unfailing sympathy offered in the most practical manner throughout their protracted sufferings, the Deputation's address bore such willing testimony, assured the Deputation in the following words: 'I can well sympathise with your feelings of resentment at aspersions that have been cast upon you and your people as a whole, but I can only assure you that I and my Government had never doubted the unswerving loyalty which we know quite well to be one of the noblest and most sacred traditions of your community. Again, when cordially welcoming the Muslim assurances of the continued and unimpeachable loyalty of the community, the Viceroy said he would not fail to transmit them to the King-Emperor, 'although for me such assurances were not needed.'

This is clear and emphatic a testimony against those who charge the

Mussulmans and, particularly the Aligarh graduates, with sedition as the Mussulmans could have ever desired, and it would be conceded that a Viceroy who has come forward to clear the reputation of the Mussulmans in their manner is entitled to address words of counsel to the more ardent spirits in the community. But the Mussulmans must be thankful to His Excellency that he showed no inclination in the course of his reply to preach a long drawn sermon such as more than one provincial satrap has indulged in recently. All that the Vicerory offered by way of criticism or advice was a passing reference to the use 'here and there' of 'bitter or heated words which it would have been better to have left unsaid.' But no one of a different faith and nationality was in a better position to judge the extent of the Muslim temptation than His Excellency whose words and actions proved such a great corrective of the silence Edward Grey and the speeches of several of Sir Edwards, colleagues. His Excellency did not, therefore, forget even in his reply to suggest that, however unwise the use of heated or bitter words here and there, it was after all only natural. For His Excellency prefaced this slight criticism with the observation that this was due to the fact that the feelings of Indian Mussulmans were sore.

As regards the Viceroy's reference to the Holy Places of the Mussulmans, His Excellency's pronouncement, following as it does the Guildhall pronouncement of Mr. Asquith and His Excellency's own speech in the Legislative Council at Simla in September last, would, we feel sure, be welcomed throughout the Muslim world. His Excellency wishes the Mussulmans to understand that the British Government has already realized 'the absolute necessity for the maintenance of the *status quo* as regards 'the Holy Places in Arabia', and in view of the fact that it is a great religious interest of the Mussulmans and the acceptance of the British responsibility for the maintenance of such a *status quo* would strengthen the loyalty of Indian Mussulmans, His Excellency was fully justified in pointing out that this is an 'important and powerful link between your community and the Government of our King-Emperor'. This shows what value the Government attach to religious freedom and Mahommedan control of the Holy Places, and if the intensity of the Mussulman's feeling on the subject of a Muslim control of the Holy Places can induce the British Government to accept the responsibility they have taken upon themselves, that intensity of feelings provides a much clearer justification for the action that the Mussulmans have themselves been taking recently in order to safeguard to sanctity of their Holy Places from violation. If it is the Government's political duty to maintain the Muslim control of Holy Places, it is only because it is a Mussulman's religious duty to maintain such control. Therefore it is a first charge on the Mussulman himself and then on his non Muslim Government. We hope His Excellency's pronouncement will set at rest all those who pretend to see danger in such a frankly peaceful religious society as the *Khuddam-i-Ka'ba*.

In this connection it may not perhaps be amiss to say that although it is

only in view of the religious interests of the Mahommedans of Indian and the value that Government attach to religious freedom and the Mahommedan control of the Holy Places that such a responsibility rests upon Great Britain, it will not be right to conclude that the views of seventy million subjects of His Majesty can be of no moment in the shaping of an Imperial foreign policy. Great Britain has already accepted the eleven million European Colonials to partnership in the business of Empire, and it would be strange if India alone, which, as Lord Morley once told the House of Lords, 'is your Lordship's only Empire', should be excluded from the benefits of such a partnership. She has always shared most willingly every Imperial liability with Great Britain, but we should like to know what Canada, or, in fact, any other Colony has yet done in this matter. Indian Mussulmans do not ignore Great Britain's Imperial commitments and do not ask for the impossible. We repeat once more that they only desire to maintain a permanent friendship between Great Britain and Muslim States, and they can be relied upon to insist on a friendly attitude towards Great Britain on the part of the Muslims States just as they can be relied upon to complain if they are led to think that Great Britain is lacking in its friendly sympathy towards them.

His Excellency referred in conclusion to the restoration of the peace in Europe and Asia, and we trust Great Britain would be able to induce the Powers to be fairer to Turkey in finally settling the question of the Aegean Islands and that every assistance, such as the loan of British officers for the administration of the Armenian Vilayets of Asia Minor, would be rendered to Turkey. On the face of it, it is unfair to strengthen the position of a Christian Prince in Muslim Albania by offering to Greece as a compensation some islands of Turkey vital to the existence of her Asiatic Empire. Nor is it fair to complain of mis-management in Armenia when Turkey so willingly offers to appoint British officers in those regions. The way to preserve the independence and integrity of her Asiatic Empire is not by recognising spheres of influence of Eurpoean Powers such as Russia and France in that Empire. Surely British diplomats could have not forgotten the fate of Persia's integrity and independence which the Anglo-Russian Convention with its spheres of influence was created to preserve. We trust these matters will result in speedy and just settlement, and we look forward with His Excellency with hope and confidence to a period of peaceful development of the Muslim community by means of self-improvement and education. The Muslim community is loyal, moderate and sober and can desire no better policy than one of solidarity and cooperation with Government and with other communities for the welfare and progress of this Empire, which, His Excellency rightly said, we all of us have so much at heart. We too devoutly hope that the pure and unalloyed faith of the Mussulmans in the Unity of God and of loyalty to their Sovereign may burn like a flame and ever grow brighter to lighten their path for many ages to come.

Source : The Comrade, 21 March 1914.

36

THE COMRADE ON THE MUSLIM LEAGUE AND ITS DISCIPLINE

Only a few years ago, complaints were not uncommonly heard that the All-India Moslem League was a sort of close corporation which had little direct touch with the currents of popular opinion in the Moslem community. A few even went so far as to describe it as a reactionary body dominated by men of fluid faiths and nimble views, who periodically met to register the decrees of Indian Government and otherwise made use of the organisation as a counterblast to the Indian National Congress. Certain recent events, however, have proved definitely that these complaints were, in the main groundless. The All-India Moslem League had come to birth at a time when political consciousness among Mussulmans was limited to a small number of individuals who were men of unusual capacity and foresight and had adequate knowledge of public affairs. They had realised the significance of the changes that were slowly but visibly coming over the methods of Indian governance and felt the supreme need of organised political action. They took the initiative and in collaboration with men of weight and influence in the community laid down the framework of an all-India organisation for he purpose. This was the most practicable course open to them under the circumstances. To seek for a democratic basis for the organisation at the time would have been obviously futile. Moslem democracy in the political sense was not yet vocal or alive. The needs of the situation could best be met by the creation of an organisation, representative of the best elements in the community, which would serve the dual functions of educating the general body of the people as well as of safeguarding their interests. The All-India Moslem League was consequently established with these objects in view. Its constitution was designed on as wide a basis as the circumstances could allow, and the scope of its work was naturally confined within the limits of the actual needs of the situation. Soon after the establishment of the League with its provincial and district branches, constitutional and administrative re-adjustments of far-reaching importance began to take shape in India, which, among other things, helped to rouse the political consciousness of the general Moslem community. The Moslem League proved to be an organised political force of immense value in those anxious times, and its utility both as an organ of representative Moslem opinion and as an instrument of popular education stood the test wonderfully. Within the first few years of its existence it succeeded in defining the Moslem political position, set forth a definite programme of work before the community and offered a common platform to the educated Mussulmans who were vegetating in narrow individual grooves and were pining for larger fields to employ their leisure and talents in the service of their community and country.

The political instincts of the Moslem democracy, which had been lying dormant for years, became alive with amazing rapidity and vigour. They found expression in vague but eager desires, some of which outstripped the cautious aspirations embodied in the early creed of the League. The impatient idealism of the new political awakening yearned for lustier cries than the League had yet been able to provide. The League was, therefore, roundly denounced as a lethargic body that moved with exasperating slowness within a limited orbit of its own and lived in severe isolation from the mass of the community that was pulsating with new thoughts and desires.

In the meantime, there began to happen a series of events of unparalled magnitude, both in India and abroad, which have left an ineffaceable mark on Moslem thought and feeling. The Experiences and trials of the community within the last three years have been the bitterest and most searching in its modern history. They shook its deepest and most cherished instincts to their very foundations. The shock of surprise, of betrayal, of disillusionment was felt by every class of Mussulmans with equal intensity. In the sacred intimacy of common grief they discovered anew their Islamic unity and the path that lies before them-a path that is beset with difficulties and perils of various kinds. It is a matter of remarkable significance that the All-India Moslem League has successfully borne the strain of a period of the utmost excitement and self-questioning through which Mussulmans have passed. The movement that it embodied was sound and vital at the core, and it is more vital and alive to-day than ever it was before. It has gained enormous access of popular strength, and is fully responsive to the needs of the people. The old complaint about the League being a reactionary body has ceased to be heard. The creed of the League has been recast to suit the changed political conditions, and it has now become a thoroughly reliable and powerful organ of Moslem public opinion. Indeed, the promptitude with which it has shaped itself to meet to the popular forces has alarmed a few of the old-fashioned men in the Moslem community, some of whom are obsessed by the craven fear lest they should soon find their old occupations gone. They accuse the League of having been bitten with revolutionary ideas, and this is perhaps the surest testimony to the fact that the Moslem political organisation has now become thoroughly communal. It was a right instinct that led H.H. the Aga Khan to observe on a memorable occasion that a permanent president of the League had become an anachronism in view of the growing political consciousness of the Moslem democracy. Much yet remains to be done to make the League an efficient instrument of the will of the community, but there can be no question that it enjoys the greatest measure of public confidence to-day and is the most representative organisation of its kind in this country.

We have been forced to make these observations at some length because the position that the League has recently come to hold in relation to communal work is not yet fully secure from the wily attacks of a species of its critics who were wont, not long ago, to trade on the confidence and goodwill of the

Moslem community. Mussulmans need not be reminded of the common place that the utility, efficiency and prestige of all organised political work depend on the degree of solidarity, public spirit and disciplined energy displayed by the workers. The future success of the Moslem League rests on three obvious postulates. It should be the most reliable exponent of the Moslem public opinion; it should command the devoted services of the ablest men in the community; it should be efficiently organised. Now, those who watched the proceedings of the last annual session of the League at Agra are perfectly aware that the League is becoming popular in the real sense, that it has now behind it the daily increasing support of Moslem democracy. It is also manifest that it now commands the services of some of the most energetic and able workers among Mussulmans. What it still lacks is efficient organisation. The utility of the political work done by the League will not attain to its full proportions as long as its machinery remains imperfect. The central organisation should have well-defined relations with the provincial and district organisations affiliated to it, and while allowing perfect freedom of initiative and action to all its branches in matters of local concern, it should exercise efficient control in all things relating to the general policy and principles of which it is the sole authoritative exponent. Its views and decisions represent the judgment of the entire Moslem community in India, and it should not tolerate any tempering with its authority by persons who are carrying on a purely personal propaganda under questionable disguises often at the instance of others who are as hostile to Moslem as to other Indian aspiration. It should enforce discipline with some rigour at this stage if it wants to make its future work useful and effective.

The existing lack of efficient organisation and discipline in the All-India Moslem League is due to various causes. The main cause has arisen from the fact that the League has only recently had to restate its policy and purpose in obedience to popular wishes. The amplification of its creed less than two years ago led to some conflict of opinion, which, however, never became serious or acute. The new programme satisfied an overwhelming majority of Mussulmans and the feeble voice of dissent was soon hushed in the general acclamation of the people. It is a remarkable fact that hardly a defection has taken place from the ranks of the League since it publicly declared the new formula of its faith. It is safe to conclude, therefore, that there is a practical unanimity among the constituents of the League about the ideals that it has in view. The situation, however, furnished a few of the self-seeking among its ranks with a new handle to serve their own personal ends. They fear to go out of the League lest they should sink into obscurity and be utterly wiped out of public life. 'Assenting with civil leer' they have elected to remain in. They are shrewd enough to percieve that they will have ample opportunities within the fold of the League to create 'scenes' and situations which they know how to turn to profitable account. It is this timorous breed of 'leaders' who are surreptitiously using every means to undermine discipline and weaken the

authority of the League. The time has now come that the League, in the interests of its own efficiency, should deal drastically with all cases in which its decisions have been flouted or its basic principles set at nought. A few cases of this character have just acquired some notoriety and it is necessary to unmask their true features to public notice.

The Hon. Mr. Mohamed Shafi, Secretary of the Punjab Provincial League, got his executive committee some days ago to 'place on record its emphatic protest' in the shape of a huge resolution, and lost no time in having it published in the press. The 'protest' relates to the 'appointment, by the Indian League, independently and over the heads of the various provincial Leagues, of committees' for the purpose of raising the Moslem National Fund, the establishment of which was decided upon by the All-India Moslem League at its Agra session. Mr. Shafi's committee 'considers it absolutely necessary that the work to be done in this connection in the various provinces should be left to the provincial Leagues alones.' Mr. Shafi himself in his letter forwarding his committee's resolution to the Secretary of the All-India Moslem League, says : 'The appointment by the central body, of these provincial committees over the heads of the various provincial leagues was so obviously opposed to axiomatic principles on which alone an All-India organisation can be smoothly worked and constituted such a slight on the provincial leagues themselves that I considered it my duty to place your letter before the executive committee of the Punjab Moslem League at its meeting held on Sunday, the 19th instant (May).' Now, it would be interesting to recall the circumstances relating to the appointment of the committees for the collection of the Moslem National Fund. As we have said, it was unanimously resolved at a meeting of the All-India Moslem League at Agra to raise a permanent fund for political work. The representatives of all the provincial leagues were present on the occasion including the Hon. Mr. Shafi. The provincial committees were appointed in consultation with the provincial representatives. When the appointment of the Punjab committee was being discussed, Mr. Shafi succeeded almost in creating a scene by refusing to accept Mr. Zafar Ali Khan as a member, with the result that the matter was left to be settled by the Punjab representatives themselves while they were at Agra. Mr. Fazl-i-Hussain, Barrister-at-Law of Lahore, gave a list to the Hon. Secretary of the All-India Moslem League on the following day, stating that their mutual differences had been settled and the names contained in the list were acceptable to all. But now that the time for practical effort has come and printed lists of the members of the provincial committees have been circulated with a view to get them to work, Mr. Shafi takes up a garrulous attitude and protests against the action of the central League. It is manifest that all the other provincial leagues have accepted the decisions reached at Agra without the least objection. They are neither aware of any violation of 'axiomatic principles' nor of the alleged 'slight' that is now apparently causing Mr. Shafi some sleepless nights. Mr. Shafi participated fully in the discussion about the

appointment of the Punjab committee. He did not talk then of 'slight' and 'axiomatic principles.' His only objection related to the inclusion of Mr. Zafar Ali Khan in the committee as one of its members. He had made a public confession of his peculiarity of character by declaring that he could not work with the Editor of the *Amindar*, and had gone even so far as to say that the Mussulmans of the 'aristocratic' class in the Punjab would be equally unwilling to work with him. The Punjab 'aristocrats' present there instantly repudiated this unblushing imputation on their public spirit and sense of duty. The Punjab committee was eventually formed with the knowledge and approval of Mr. Shafi and it never occurred to him till after full five months that its appointment offended against 'axiomatic principles' and constituted a 'slight' to the *amour propre* of his committee and his league.

Mr. Shafi's tactics would have ranked as consummate exercises in the art of party manoeuvring, if only they had some dash of courage behind them. But the fates have cast him in a mould that is not decidedly heroic. During the past few years a series of exasperating situations have sprung upon him, like bolts from the blue, which would have sufficed to disconcert a man of steadier nerve than he. His training as a public man has not proved adequate to the needs of those situations and the spectacle of his flight from position to position in search of some reliable cover has not been altogether edifying. He has talked in turn of law and order, of respect due to constituted authority, of moderation and constructive work, even of political reform, administrative changes and self-government. He has tried every catchward of the hour and tested the value of every straw that has floated past him on the crest of the popular waves. The pathos of his situation is that he is capable of feeling all the Ulsteria of Sir Edward Carson's creation without having the quality of the last-Dicther. That is why most of his attempts to create a brief noise about himself have ended in a public laugh at his expense.

One must not, however, ignore the fact that Mr. Shafi controls an executive committee that is obedient to his will. The resolution relating to the Moslem National Fund was passed at a meeting of the committee attended by Mr. Shafi and three other gentlemen who have no pretension to any weight or influence in public affairs. Mr. Shafi practically rules the roost in the Punjab League, thanks to his success in having so far kept out of the League most of the younger generation of workers whose capacity and independence of character are beyond question. With the general body of the League composed mostly of men of stereotyped views and indifferent intellectual equipments and with a committee mainly packed with his supporters, Mr. Shafi may have his way in recording protests and reeling off grandiloquent 'resolutions' by the dozen. But for the sake of his own reputation as a public man he should come down from the fence and define his position. Let him openly come forward and defy the All-India Moslem League if he dares. Let him frankly unbosom himself and tell the Moslem public what he wants. These questionable tactics of his are doing no good either to him or to the Commu-

nity that he claims to serve. The collection of the Moslem National Fund may wait indefinitely; but Mr. Shafi must vent his personal spite against Mr. Zafar Ali Khan, and should in the last resort take shelter behind 'axiomatic principles' and in aginay 'slights' simply to thwart the progress of an important communal undertaking. His dread of association with Mr. Zafar Ali Khan recalls to our mind another equally amusing episode that dates back to the annual session of the All-India Moslem League at Karachi in 1907. The Punjab Moslem League had not yet come into existence, but Mr. Shafi had already picked up a quarrel with Mr. Fazl-i-Husain about the formation of the provincial branch. The contending parties fought their rival claims with considerable virulence at Karachi and some efforts were made by men from other provinces to induce the Punjab stalwarts to compose their mutual differences and work harmoniously together. But Mr. Shafi and Mr. Shah Din would not yield, and the latter declared that he would not work in an organisation of which Mr. Fazl-i-Husain was also a member. Mr. Shafi's outburst of petty egotism at Agra was evidently inspired by a pardonable desire to imitate the superior manner of his learned cousin. We trust, however, that he is free from the vanity of imagining that he is indispensable. If not, he is under cruel illusion. At all events, if he thinks he is well-advised in the choice of his tactics and methods of work, he should throw a bold, open challenge to those who differ from him and test his position. If he is sure of his ground, why does he not stump the country with his gospel of salvation and come back to power borne on the shoulders of devoted multitudes? His existing methods of conducting the affairs of the Punjab League cannot obviously be allowed to go on. The League has got to be democratised and made an energetic and disciplined body that would do some real work for the people on approved lines and not exist simply to give weight and prestige to the evolutions of a peculiarly self-conscious and self-complacent individual.

The other case to which we want to make a brief reference relates to the formation of a district Moslem League at Etawah to which some amount of noisy publicity has been given in the papers. The promoters of the new organisation are reported to have declared that they have no faith in the ideal of self-government adopted by the All-India Moslem League and approve in this respect the attitude of the I. P. Provincial League. The Etawah report gives prominence to a certain Mr. Ameer Ali. We do not know who this gentleman is, unless he is the paid clerk in the office of the U. P. League. If so, we would like to know what business has this person to go about touring in districts at public expense with a view to bolster up mushroom organisations, which presume to dictate policy and principles to the whole community and its all-India political organ? The principles laid down by the central organisation must be accepted by all its affiliated branches. If any branch does not make a clear declaration to the effect that it approves of the basic creed of the League, it should not be allowed affiliation. The UP League,

which appears to have become a nest of intrigue and personal wrangles, should be called to account for the opposition which some of its office-bearers have set up against the declared policy of the parent League, and of which they are making a public parade. If the UP League refuses to fall into line with the central organisation it should be disaffiliated at once, and a new organisation in perfect harmony with the general will of the community should be created in its place. It is really strange that the Mussulmans of the United Provinces, who form the most educated and progressive portion of the Moslem community, should have such a provincial League masquerading in their name. Sham organisations, run on lines of individual self-interest, cannot be allowed to exist under the wings of the All-India Moslem League. They should either be mended or ended.'

Source : The Comrade, 6 June 1914.

37

THE NATIONAL REVIEW ON THE MUSLIM POLITICAL MOVEMENT

Less than ten years ago we were accustomed to think of the Mahommedans of India as the most loyal and peaceful community in the Dependency. They had their little outbursts sometimes, but always during their religious festivals, when they came into conflict with Hindus. There were on such occasions a few broken heads, a few repressive movements by the local police, and perhaps a minor trail ending in a few mild sentences. The quarrels of Mahommedans with the Hindus revealed no symptom of antagonism to British rule. So settled became the belief in Moslem docility that British administrators forgot the experiences of their predecessors. They never quite realised that confidence in Mahommedan tendencies was of the late comparatively modern growth. Yet in 1871 so competent an observer of the late Sir William Hunter wrote a book entitled *The Indian Mussulmans*, which contained in its opening pages these words :

The Mussulmans of India are, and have been for many years, a source of chronic danger to the Britith power in India. For some reason or other they hold aloof from our system, and the changes in which the more flexible Hindus have cheerfully acquiesced, are regarded by them as deep personal wrongs.

In the past eighteen months the faith of the Government of India in the

tractability of the Mahommedans has been very rudely shaken. We have seen the Moslem League joining in the agitation for self-Government, and openly associating itself with the propaganda of the Hindu Congress. We have seen Mussulman speakers making very foolish and inflammatory speeches about the Balkan War, and apparently expecting Great Britain to crusade on behalf of Turkey. We have seen a little dispute about the out-buildings of a Mosque of Cawnpore develop into a grave riot, in which many were killed and injured, while the whole of Moslem India waxed excited about a trivial controversy which would have attracted no attention whatever half a dozen years ago. Finally, we have seen the Aga Khan resign the presidentship of the Moslem League, and Mr. Ameer Ali retire from the London branch, leaving the Mussulman movement in both countries to the guidance of less cautious and far more inexperienced hands. It is instructive to examine these occurrences and to endeavour to ascertain their origion.

In the March number of the *National Review* I discussed at length the new unrest among Indian Mahommedans, and when thus dealing with its earlier phases had no conception that it would so soon require further discussion. For an explanation of the closer relations now subsisting between the Hindu and Mahommedan political movement my readers may be referred to my previous article. It is convenient to take up the story afresh with the Cawnpore riots, which have an interest far exceeding their immediate magnitude. The Cawnpore disturbances repay close study, for they show exactly how grave trouble will arise in India if it ever comes. I once asked a very great and experienced soldier what his views were about the possibility of a rising in India. He said : 'If we ever have one again, I am quite sure it will begin from some totally unforeseen and probably entirely trivial cause. It will be produced by some silly story which we cannot stop, or by some paltry occurrence to which we shall attach no importance. Such a rumour or incident would not be the real cause of the rising, but it will serve to start it.' The Cawnpore riots sprang from just such a source. They began in connection with the tiny washing place of an obscure mosque, and the story of that washing place reverberated throughout India until it inflamed millions of Mahommedans and produced dozens of truculent mass meetings.

The blame for the Cawnpore trouble does not rest upon Moslems alone. It seems reasonably clear that the local authorities, and still more the United Provinces Government, were not entirely free from fault. So long ago as 1909 the Municipal Board of Cawnpore innocently decided to make a new road through the Machhli Bazaar quarter of the city. Its plans included the demolition of many buildings and it is said that the original scheme would have involved the removal of three Mahommedan mosques and two Hindu temples. The scheme was afterwards modified, and it was proposed to acquire for the purposes of the road only a small portion of the courtyard of the Machhli Bazaar Mosque, together with a little washing-place or bath-

room which did not form part of the main building. The mosque authorities were duly notified, and at first made no objection. It is a very open question whether this wash-house was technically a sacred place or not. As a layman, with some experience of mosques, I should say that it had no genuine sanctity whatever. Various Mahommedans of high position who were consulted at a later period by Sir James Meston, the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, advised him that it 'had not the same sanctity as the place of worship proper.' Eminent interpreters of Moslem law and custom have since invested this trivial wash-house with the most sacred character; yet it was a spot where shoes might be worn, and all familiar with Moslem places of worship will know the distinction thereby implied. The fact is that lawgivers of Islam are sometimes very ready to frame rulings to suit their own requirements.

For three years the matter seems to have attracted little public attention, but towards the end of 1912 many Hindus of Cawnpore protested against a proposal, which formed part of the road-making scheme, to remove one of their temples. Sir James Meston went to Cawnpore in November, discussed the question with prominent Hindus, and agreed that the temple should not be disturbed. His visit seems to have caused the Mahommedans of the city to turn their attention to the Machhli Bazaar Mosque. The Mahommedan representatives on the Municipal Board brought the question before that body in March, and at their instance the Board sent to the Provincial Government a recommendation. A further attempt in May to pass a resolution asking the Government to reconsider its decision was defeated by the casting vote of the chairman of the Board. An amendment accepting the Government's decision as final was carried by the same single vote. A deputation of Mahommedans waited on the Collector of Cawnpore, but without result. Two memorials were submitted to the Lieutenant-Governor, and backed by Mahommedans notables, but they were both rejected. On 1 July the wash-house was demolished by the local authorities, and then the trouble began.

As to this portion of the narrative, it must be said that the provincial Government and the local authorities were both to blame because they did not set about their undertaking in the right way. There are diplomatic methods of adjusting such little difficulties which are well understood in India. A conciliatory official would assuredly have managed to build a new wash-house first, and then, after a suitable interval of the old one. The Government was wrong because it does not perceive how easily this small grievance might be magnified. It should have paid more heed to the Mahommedan protests, however, trifling the matter seemed. Sir James Meston has explained that he was influenced by the opinions of the Mussulmans he consulted, who doubted whether the wash-house was part of the sacred buildings; and he was still more influenced by the fact that similar alterations had recently been made in mosques at Lucknow with the consent

of the local Moslems and without complaint. These are reasonable grounds to advance, but they do not remove the impression that between March and July the Cawnpore case was not very judiciously handled.

After the wash-house was demolished excitement quickly grew. Mahommedan newspapers published in other parts of India called attention to the behaviour of the Cawnpore authorities, and made vigorous protests. It is quite certain that the Cawnpore Mahommedans would never have resorted to violence had they not been subjected to inflammatory incitements from without. The Mussulmans agitators who are so new and sinister a feature of the Indian landscape, were looking for a fresh pretext to stir up strife, and they found it at Cawnpore. The Hindoo newspapers of Calcutta and elsewhere, which in the past have shown small consideration for the sanctity of Moslem mosques, joined in the outburst of manufactured indignation. The agitation came to a head on 3 August when thousands of Mahommedans met at Cawnpore to protest against the destruction of the wash-house. The day was a Sunday, and the bulk of the mob was composed of mill-hands, for Cawnpore is a great manufacturing centre. It is worthwhile noting that the industrial development of India is providing new fields for agitators. The task of sowing sedition among the peasantry is tedious and often unprofitable, but the ignorant and the excitable mill-hands in the great cities are soon roused into violence, as Bombay has found to its cost. On this occasion a crowd, which is said to have numbered 10,000, swarmed down to the Machhli Bazaar mosque and began rebuilding the wash-house. It was confronted by the Collector, the Superintendent of Police, and two European sergeants, together with a small force of native armed police. There were only four Englishmen against a dense mob which had got completely out of control, and was beside itself with passion. The evidence of eye-witnesses is that the shouting and the din were terrific. The Collector with great intrepidity, rode forward and urged the rioters to disperse, but was assailed with volleys of stones and bricks. The police then fired on the rioters, and nineteen were killed, including one Hindu and one plain-clothes constable. The wounded numbered nearly fifty. Such is the history of the Cawnpore riots, which collapsed very quickly.

A large number of arrests were made, and eventually 120 persons were placed on trial on charges of rioting and causing grievous hurt. The principal of the local Mahommedan Theological College was charged with sedition, the accusition being based upon a speech he delivered at the meeting which preceeded the riots. A fund was raised for the defence of the accused persons, and over £ 4000 was quickly subscribed. It is significant that the Mahommedans of the Bombay Presidency made very little response to the appeal. A curious thing was that a separate fund for the relief of the families and dependents of the rioters slain by the police was headed by a subcription from the Viceroy. On 16 August Sir James Meston received a deputation of influential Mahommedans who asked that the demolished por-

tion of the mosque might be restored. He declined to consent, stating that it was his clear duty 'to proceed on the principle that the Government cannot accept the dictation of force.' On 20 September Sir James Meston left for England to give evidence before the Indian Finance Commission, and Mr. Baillie was appointed to officiate as Lieutenant-Governor during his absence.

On 13 October the Viceroy paid a special visit to Cawnpore, and inspected the Machhli Bazaar mosque. Within two hours of his arrival Lord Hardinge announced to a gathering of Mahommedans that he came to bring them peace. His decision was that an arcade should be built eight feet above the surface of the road, on which the mosque authorities might reconstruct their wash-house. The pavement below the arcade was to be used as a footpath, as proposed in the scheme for the new road. Lord Hardinge added that, having brought peace, he wished also to show mercy. He therefore 'invited' the local Government to withdraw the charges against the arrested rioters, and to order their release. The 101 persons still in custody were set free within an hour. Lord Hardinge left Cawnpore later in the day. He had brought peace, but he had triumphed over the Government of India. When Mr. Tilak was convicted Bombay rioted for a week. One wonders what would have been the state of Western India today if, at the close of seven days of uproar, Lord Minto had taken a special train to Bombay and 'invited' Lord Sydenham to release Mr. Tilak. The *Pioneer* summed up the impression left upon most thoughtful men when it wrote :

The Mahommedan community throughout these provinces was determined to utilise the incident for a trial of their strength in their recent attitude of combination against the Government. They have joined issue, they have maintained a united front, and they have prevailed. There can be no doubt about this point.

One cannot take the responsibility of condemning Lord Hardinge's action. He must have known the requirements of the situation, and his decision was assuredly not a mere impulse. Those who know him are well aware that the ignoble motive of seeking popularity with the crowd must have been equally far from his thoughts. All that will be said here is that if his action was necessary, it was a very regrettable necessity, for it has made Indian Mahommedans feel that they can upon occasion dominate the Government. It placated the Moslems of Cawnpore, but it only spurred the followers of Islam in Calcutta to renewed clamour. Within a week a mass meeting had been held in Calcutta at which the Viceroy was called upon to order the restoration of the demolished wash-house 'in its original shape'. The Calcutta malcontents passed a further resolution of a singularly impertinent character, calling upon the Mahommedan leaders of the United Provinces 'to explain to the Moslems immediately under what religious authority they consented to His Excellency's settlement of the mosque problem.' They have since held a far larger gathering at which they have renewed

the same preposterous demands. There is good reason to believe that the Cawnpore outbreak was really fomented from Calcutta, where many Mahommedans are now in close alliance with Hindu agitators. The Mahommedans of Bengal are of a very different stamp from their co-religionists in the United Provinces. They have less restraint and respond far more readily to incitements; and their emissaries find pliable material in the mill-hands of Cawnpore, who are not typical of the true Moslem stock of the United Provinces.

I very rarely devote these notes to a narrative of such length, but the Cawnpore episode has not been closely followed in this country, and its significance ought to be more widely understood. Its net result has been that the younger Moslems, who are active apostles of discontent, claim that they have won a 'victory', which they are exploiting to the utmost. Their achievement is recorded at a time when many other symptoms of Mahommedan unrest have become visible. At Aligarh College, where the late Sir Syed Ahmed dreamed such glowing dreams of the future of Indian Moslems, respectable Mahommedans of moderate tendencies were recently howled down and refused a hearing, although some of them had been working for the Mahommedan cause when their assailants were still unborn. The young men who rejected their counsel were for the most part products of Aligarh, whose education has given them the power of expression without any accompanying restraint. A sinister feature of the new Moslem movement in India is that Aligarh graduates are in the van. They are thrusting aside the older men, joining hands with the Hindus, and openly preaching hostility to British rule. They have seized upon the Balkan War as a pretext for incediary oratory. They pretend that the Powers of Europe are conspiring to seize the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and they are obtaining large sums from ignorant Mussulmans for the alleged purpose of preserving the Sacred Places from defilement by Christians. The old Indian game of spreading excitement by unfounded rumours is being steadily pursued. Moslems are told, and are being persuaded to believe, that hundreds of innocent devotees of the faith were shot down at Cawnpore by the brutal minions of the Government. There is much wild talk of risings. Attempts are being made to temper with the loyalty of the Mahommedan troops. Foolish efforts, which meet with little response, have been made to get into touch with Moslem Governments of other countries. The Mahommedan population in the larger centres of India is getting thoroughly out of hand, and that is a development far more dangerous and menacing then all the Hindu plots and outrages of the last six years. When the Moslems of India grow disloyal, we are very near grave trouble.

For an analysis of the earlier causes which have led to this deplorable situation, I must again refer my readers to my article in the *National Review* for March. It remains to record its most serious result up to the present. His Highness the Aga Khan has notified his intention to relinquished the presidentship of the All-India Moslem League, and Mr. Ameer Ali has withdrawn from

the affiliated organisation of Moslems in London. The Aga Khan has long been the recognised leader of nearly seventy millions of Indian Mahommedans. He is a prince of cosmopolitan experience, of great intellectual attainments, wielding in this and other countries and influence which no other Indian Mahommedan can hope to rival. His skill as a writer on Eastern question has been repeatedly shown in the pages of this Review. That he has long wanted to withdraw from the presidentship of the League, for purely personal reasons, is well-known. Despite his guarded and careful explanations, which show complete devotion to the Moslem cause, it is difficult not to feel that his resignation at this juncture is really due to the new tendencies now visible among Indian Mussulmans. They have got beyond his control and it must be assumed that he is no longer willing to bear a responsibility which he cannot exercise. Mr. Ameer Ali's published reason for his resignation are evidently marked by similar reservations. Had he felt able to say all that was in his mind, he would doubtless have made it clear that a member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council could not be associated with the new and reckless activities of the League. The 'Young Moslems' have in short, captured the organisation and are starting Islam in India on fresh and dangerous paths. The old leaders are dropping away, and the new men who are taking their place mean mischief. No more sinister tendency has been revealed in India during the last half-century.

Source : The Comrade, 14 January 1914.

38

LETTER FROM SIR HARCOURT BUTLER TO SIR JAMES DUBOULAY PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

16 June 1914

I have been seeing a good many Mahommedans lately and all my information goes to show that they are quarrelling more than before amongst themselves; that Mahomed Ali and Zafar Ali are losing influence, and their enemies are now demanding accounts of war funds etc., that the circulation of the *Comrade* and the *Zamindar* is falling; and that the editors are very near a rupture between themselves. The Eastern Bengal and Western Punjab Mahommedans are strongly opposed to the deputation to the Viceroy. The Aligarh party is more or less isolated, and Mahmudabad is laughed at. Mahomed Shafi has tumbled down completely on the Government side of the fence, and is

anxious to break away from the Moslem League, which is now weakened. I do not know whether this Calcutta mosque case will stir them up again. Religious questions are the only questions which are interesting in India to Indians, and I think you will see in the next year or so that political questions recede to an extent which does not on the face of it, and in the general opinion, seem probable now.

Source : Hardinge Papers, 1914.

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SECTION 7

COMMUNAL HARMONY

1

LETTER FROM L. HARE TO MINTO

20 March 1907

'As to the relations between Hindus and Mahommedans, they are not so strained as they have been to my knowledge formerly, and if the Hindus will not interfere with the Mahommedans and will give them the same freedom as the Mahommedans have given to Hindus, I do not think they will be'so strained. I can remember very vividly the time of the Gaurakshini riots when, owing to the Hindu agitation against cow-killing, the relations between Hindus and Mahommedans were gravely strained indeed, and this very widely over India. It is the ryot chiefly who has felt the punishment of the boycott, and he is much more largely Mahommedan than Hindu. In the case of the boycott as with cow-killing, the Hindu will find it very difficult to coerce the Mahommedans and if he persists in his attempt will certainly create strained relation.

***Source* : Minto Papers : Correspondence with Persons in India, January-July 1907.**

2

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE DACCA CONFERENCE ON HINDU-MUSLEM ENTENTE

8 May 1907

(1) That an immediate settlement of the difficulties between Hindus and Mahommedans is highly desirable. (2) That a committee of six representatives be appointed to meet the recognised leaders of the Hindu Community to bring about a settlement. (3) That the committee be desolved after placing before the Mahommedans Association the reply of the Hindu leaders. (4) That thereafter a committee of 40 members of both communities be formed to prepare a basis for a better understanding between the two communities. That the President of the Association be empowered to fix an early date for a Conference, after communicating with the Secretary of the Landholders Association.

***Source* : The Pioneer, 11 May 1907.**

3

PROCLAMATION ISSUED BY THE NAWAB OF MURSHIDABAD ON HINDUS AND MAHOMMEDANS

The good of the country depends upon the well-being of the Hindus and Mahommedans alike, and can be only accomplished by their combined efforts, and if any difference of opinion exists we should be prepared to tolerate them and treat them in a spirit of sympathy. We deprecate the use of force in enforcing the opinion of any section of the community in any matter. I deplore the disturbances which have taken place in Eastern Bengal. All right thinking men, Hindus, and Mahommedans, must condemn them as highly injurious to the interests of both communities and good of the administration. I appeal to both Hindus and Mahommedans, to the rich and the poor, high and the low, to use their influence in their respective spheres to promote and establish friendly relation between the two communities. We have long lived as brothers, and let us continue to live as brothers for the common well-being and good of the country at large.

Source : The Pioneer, 24 May 1907.

4

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN'S SPEECH AT THE HINDU-MAHOMMEDAN CONFERENCE HELD AT ALLAHABAD

The Hindu-Mahommedan Conference was held on Sunday morning at Raja Hotel, Sir W. Wedderburn's residence, instead of at the Mayo Hall as originally arranged owing to a slight indisposition of Sir William Wedderburn. There were over 100 gentlemen present, about 40 Mahommedans and 60 Hindus. Among these were some Sir William Wedderburn, H.H. the Aga Khan, the Maharaja Bahadur of Durbhanga, the Hon. Nawab Syed Mahommed, Babu Saroda Charan Mitra, the Hon. Moulvi Shams-ul-Huda, Babu Surendra Nath Bannerjee, Nawab Vikar-ul-Mulk Bahadur, the Hon. Mr. Gokhale, the Hon. the Prince of Arcot, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, the Hon. Mr. Ibrahim Rahimtoolah, the Hon. Pandit Sunder Lal Munshi, Aziz Mirza, the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Bose, the Hon. Mr. Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy, the Hon. Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, the Hon. Nawab Sarfaraz Hasan, the Hon. Rao Bahadur R. N. Nudholkar, the Hon. Mr.

Shafi, the Hon. Mr. N. Subbaraon, the. Hon. Mr. Umar Hayat, Mr. Daji Abaji Khare, the Hon. Mr. Aftab Ahmed Khan, Rai Bahadur Lala Baijnath, Mr. Syed Nabiullah, Lala Munshi Ram, the Hon. Nawab Abdul Majid, Lala Harkishan Lal, Nawab Nazirul Malik, the Hon. Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas, the Hon. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Dr. Satish Chandra Bannerjee, the Hon. Mr. Mazharul Haq, Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Mahommed Ali, the Hon. Mr. S. Sinha, the Hon. Mr. Rafiuddin Ahmed, the Hon. Mr. Deep Narayan Singh, Mr. Abdul Raoof, Pandit Bishan Narayan Dass, Mr. Syed Ali Bilgrami, Rajah Prithipal Singh, Mr. Syed Hasan Imam, Babu Ishwar Saran, Prince Sultan Mahmud, Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra, etc. His Highness the Aga Khan proposed Sir William Wedderburn to the chair in a short speech in which he warmly eulogised his services to India. The Maharaja of Durbhanga seconded the motion and Sir William took the chair amid cheers. He made the following speech.

Your Highness, Maharaja Bahadur, and Gentlemen.

I feel much honoured by your invitation to me to take the chair on this occasion. It is most generous of you thus to condone my rashness in intervening in so delicate a matter as the relations between the two great communities of India. My excuse is that I wish well to both the communities, and I feel actually that the growing tension between them is a serious menace to the progress and prosperity of this country. With Hindus and Mahommedans working cordially together in the public interest a great and happy future for India is assured. Without it all the efforts to achieve national progress must prove more or less unavailing. Gentlemen, I have no wish to under-rate the difficulties in your path, but the very fact that so many Hindu and Mahommedan leaders have met together, animated by a common desire to help in finding a solution of those difficulties, is to my mind, a matter of great significance and an augury of good for the future of this land. I think I may say that we are here to-day not necessarily to reach definite conclusions, if that be found impracticable, but (1) to have, in the first place, a free and frank interchange of views, made in a temperate and friendly spirit, on the more important questions that divide the two communities, (2) to discover what common ground there is for joint action by the two communities, and to arrange, if possible, for such joint action, and (3) to ensure, where the Mahommedans and Hindus must differ, that the controversies and pursuit of different interests shall be conducted without unnecessary bitterness and with a reasonable regard for the legitimate interests of either party. I think these are important objects, and I am sure you will all agree that, whatever the result of this Conference, it was worth while to have assmbled to consider how they could be promoted. Gentlemen, as I have already mentioned publicly, I had the advantage, before leaving England, of a consultation in this matter with such distinguished Indian leaders as H. H. the Aga Khan, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, and Mr. Ameer Ali and since coming to this country I have taken every opportunity that could be found to ascertain the views of a number of

other leading Hindu and Mahommedan gentlemen. Nothing has struck me more than the fact that the present estrangement—and I fear I must say growing estrangement between the two communities—is deeply deplored by leaders on both sides, who regret and condemn the general charges made by irresponsible persons against the character and motives of either community. There is also a fairly general recognition of the fact that it is the duty of leading men on both sides to work now for conciliation, as without such conciliation the peace and well-being of India are in serious danger.

CONCILIATION BOARDS

Gentlemen, if you think that these statements are right, a temperate and friendly interchange of views on such questions as may be brought up for consideration at to-day's meeting should find us nearer to, and not further from, the object we all have at hearts. It is not for me to say what you should do at this Conference. But one suggestion I will venture to make and it is this. Even if you are not able to arrive at a definite conclusion on any questions coming up before you to-day, I think you might agree to appoint a small Committee of influential men from both sides and refer to it such matters as appear capable of adjustment, in friendly consultation of matters like the creation of Conciliation Boards. I respectfully hope that this suggestion will commend itself to both sides. I cannot close my remarks without expressing my sense to H. H. the Aga Khan's great courtesy in abridging the proceedings at Nagpur and bringing to Allahabad for this Conference so many leading Mahommedan gentlemen.

As no one on the Hindu side could undertake to issue corresponding invitations, I ventured to write and ask a few Hindu leaders to be present and I am gratefull to them for their kind response.

MEMORANDUM OF BUSINESS

The following memorandum[1] of business was before the Conference :

(1) Establishment of Conciliation Boards as suggested by the London Muslim League to the Secretary of State.

(2) Representation to Government to re-establish a Court of Arbitration.

(3) Combined efforts to discourage litigation and to reduce the cost which, in fact, is draining the resources of the country and bringing ruin and misery to hundreds of litigants of both communities.

(4) The abolition on both sides of the system of boycott against each other.

(5) The abolition on both sides of rings in Government Offices and Departments of State to keep out, or to oust, members of either community.

(6) Stoppage on both sides of endeavours to prescribe the language of either side.

[1] *The Indian Review*, January 1911.

(7) The Mahommedans are in a minority, and are often unable to secure, in spite of all goodwill, adequate representation on representative bodies, such as Local or District Boards.

(8) Combined efforts to promote the healthy economic development of both communities by discouraging high rates of interest, and, possibly, limiting the same.

(9) Discouraging of force sales of mortgaged properties.

(10) The recognition, on both sides, of the religious institutions of both communities, such as devutter and waqf and abstention on either side from bringing them to sale.

His Highness the Aga Khan next made a statement on behalf of the Mahommedan members present, Babu Saroda Charan Mitra following with a similar statement on behalf of the Hindu members. Both speakers expressed upon the audience the necessity of approaching the question under consideration in a spirit of earnest conciliation and mutual forbearance and good-will. At this stage Sir William Wedderburn retired, leaving the chair to be taken by H.H. the Aga Khan.

A free interchange of views then followed on the languages question, the question of communal representation and the question of separate arrangements for Mahommedan education.

These questions as also cow-killing and music before mosques were then referred, as suggested by Sir William Wedderburn in his inaugural address, to a Committee of eight Hindus and eight Mahommedans, to which at the special instance of H.H. the Aga Khan the Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale's name was added. The members of the Committee are :

Mahommedans : Mr. Mahommed Aziz Mirza, the Hon. Nawab Abdul Majid, the Hon. Mr. Syed Shamsul Huda, the Hon. Moulvi Rafiuddin Ahmed, the Hon. Mian Mahommed Shafi, Dr. Nabiulla, the Hon. Nawab Syed Mahommed and the Hon. Mr. Ibrahim Rahimatulla.

Hindus : The Maharaja of Durbhanga, Babu Saroda Charan Mitra, Babu Surendranath Bannerjee, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, the Hon. Babu Ganga Prasad Varma, Lala Munshi Ram, Lala Harkishan Lal, the Hon. Mr. Harchand Rai Vishindas, Secretaries the Hon. Babu Ganga Prasad Varma and Mr. Nabiulla.

The proceedings were concluded with a brief speech by Sir William Wedderburn, who returned to the chair to thank the members for their attendance and congratulate them on the work they had done. A vote of thanks to the chair was then proposed by the Hon. Mr. Jinnah, seconded by the Hon. Babu Ganga Prasad Varma and carried by acclamation. A vote of thanks to H. H. the Aga Khan, proposed by Babu Saroda Charan Mitra, concluded the proceedings.

There was a note of harmony throughout the proceedings and the general feeling was that the Conference had done good work.

Source : **The Pioneer, 4 January 1911.**

5

LETTER FROM W. WEDDERBURN TO HON. HARCHANDRAI WISHENDAS ENCLOSING THE MEMORANDUM OF AMEER ALI ON HINDU-MUSLIM RAPPROACHEMENT

18 November 1910

Apprehensions of growing estrangement between Hindus and Mahommedans are causing the deepest distress to friends of Indian progress and I have been very anxious to do what little I can towards promoting conciliation between these two great communities with a view to united work for the public good. The late Sir Syed Ahmed likened the Hindus and Mahommedans of India to the two eyes of a damsel both equally needed for perfect health and beauty. This seems a true saying; and, especially in these troublous times, we need the undivided devotion of all true sons of India, if she is ever to attain to that happy future we ardently desire.

With a view to practical action I have been in consultation with H.H. the Aga Khan, Mr. Amir Ali and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, and we think that the first step to be attempted is that of bringing together for friendly conference of some of the influential leaders of all communities. I have accordingly been asked as a friend of both sides to write to you, and cordially invite your cooperation. The idea first suggested by H.H. the Aga Khan is that the conference should take place in Bombay prior to my departure from India on January 14th.

I enclose a Memorandum of some of the points which have been suggested as suitable for discussion. The petition is undoubtedly a delicate one, but it is hoped that some useful results may be obtained if the difficulties of the situation are approached with good will and forbearance on both sides.

MEMORANDUM

(1) The establishment of Conciliation Boards as suggested by the London Moslem League to the Secretary of State.

(2) Representation to Government to re-establish Courts of Arbitration.

(3) Combined efforts to discourage litigation and to reduce its cost, which in fact is draining the resources of the country and bringing ruin and misery to hundreds of well-to-do families, Hindus and Mahommedans.

(4) The abolition on both sides of the system of boycott against each other.

(5) The abolition on both sides of 'ring' in Government offices and departments of State to keep out or to oust Members of either community.

(6) Stopping on both sides of endeavours to prescribe the language of either side.

(7) As the Mahommedans are in a minority, and are often unable to secure inspite of all good-will adequate representation on representative bodies, such as Local and District Boards and Municipal Corporations, recognition of their claims to communal representation on a fair and equitable basis.

(8) Combined efforts to promote the healthy economic developing of both communities by discouraging high rates of interest, and if possible limiting the same.

(9) Discouragement of forced sales of mortgaged properties.

(10) Recognition on both sides of the religious institutions of both communities such as Debutter and Waqf, and abstention on either side from bringing them to sale.

Source: **The Akhlaq, 10 December 1910.**

6

LETTER FROM ACTION FRONT TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING THE HINDU-MAHOMMEDAN CONFERENCE

2 January 1911

Sir William Wedderburn, who has been presiding over the so-called National Congress at Allahabad, intends, we are told to, also hold a Conference with the object of bringing about union between the rival Hindu and Mahommedan interests in the country. It was Sir William also, who, with his English *confreres*, originally started the National Congress for the purpose of removing all racial differences, and making one nation of the peoples of India. Yet the other day, when interviewed in passing through Bombay, he admitted with reference to the Congress that 'there is a striking difference in the position, as it was even six years ago, as compared with the present; the main difference is that in the old days we were all quite unanimous, while now there are different factions.' He considers these differences a healthy sign of growth, whereas they are in reality the fundamental divergencies arising from wholly distinct racial interests; and I predict that as the Congress has conspicuously failed in uniting even the varied Hindu races, so likewise will the Conference fail to bring about unity between the Mahommedans and Hindus.

I do not make these predictions in any scoffing spirit, for I consider racial difference essential to the development of the various peoples of India. This development, I maintain, can only take place on a purely racial basis, that is to say each race must progress separately, along the lines of its own national characteristics, and not through an artificial unity with other races differing from it in temperament and idiosyncrasies. It is inconceivable, for

instance, that one 'nation', can be formed out of such heterogeneous and conflicting elements as Afghans, Bengalis, Tamils, Mahrattas, Sindhis, and Bhils, yet it is not at all illogical to suppose that each one of these races has in itself the capacity for becoming a progressive nation, if allowed to work out its own salvation separately. We cannot imagine that Europe would have progressed as it has, if all its peoples had tried to amalgamate their interests as one nation. The reason why Europe leads the world is because each one of its races has developed separately, and brought to perfection its own inherent qualities. There now exists a friendly rivalry between the various nations, which is in itself an incentive to advancement and maintenance of a high standard of civilization. It is a mistake to suppose that European nations tend towards coalition; on the contrary there is a strong movement towards racial separation. For instance, what was once the Empire of Turkey-in-Europe has been steadily disintegrating into separate and independent nationalities, such as Roumania, Servia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Greece. Only the other day Norway separated from Sweden; and there is no doubt that Hungary will be independent of Austria before long. Even in Great Britain, Ireland has for sometime past been cultivating its Celtic language, and its own racial interests; and Scotland and Wales show the same tendency. In fact modern history shows that greater advancement is made by independent individual races, than by mixed nationalities. Take the contrasting examples of Turkey-in-Europe, and Japan. The former with its mixed races is the most backward country in Europe, while the Japanese who have worked out their own salvation, quite apart from other Mongol races, are now the leading Asiatic nation.

Why is it that the Indians, with all their manifold opportunities, have not hitherto shown even the semblance of forming this much glibly answer that it is because of want of unity. This answer sounds plausible, but does not really touch the root of the question. The true explanation lies in the fact that leaving aside the aborigines, the bulk of the population is composed of foreign invaders who have entered the country at various times. History proves that each conquering race in turn has degenerated more or less to the level of the conquered. While racial distinctions have of necessity continued to exist, the original vigour and virility of these conquerors have gradually almost entirely disappered through climatic and other causes. Now it logically follows that if each individual race has not hitherto shown sufficient energy, to raise itself it cannot possibly be expected to waste its efforts in vainly attempting to raise others. There can therefore, be no united 'nation' of Indians; and if such a combination could artificially be brought about, its own inherent weaknesses would prevent its continuance.

The real regeneration of India rests on a racial basis. Each individual race in India must do as the Japanese and the various European races have done; and that is, come out from among the others, and work out its own salvation separately. In this way the best and the highest qualities in each will

developed; distinctive characteristics, religion and language will be preserved; and true racial patriotism will once again flourish. The development of these separate races will of course be unequal. Some will advance faster than others. And as these arrive at a standard of civilization compatible with self-government there cannot be the slightest doubt that they will be given the fullest freedom as autonomous self-governing States, within the British Empire. A time will then follow when these separate nationalities may combine to form the United States of India. In this direction only will the union of the peoples of India be found.

The mistake made by the Congress party lies in not realising that in the 'one-nation' idea the pace of the whole movement must depend on the capabilities of its most backward factor; whereas the development of separate races would progress at the pace of its most advanced race.

To return to the original point—the conference between Mahommedans and Hindus—the sincerest advice that their friends can give them is to live wel' alone. In the natural order of things there never can be any real union between Mahommedans and Hindus. This does not mean that they cannot live in peace alongside each other, but simply that their fundamental differences, in religion and descent are so great that any amalgamation would only tend to neutralise each other's best characteristics and hinder rather than help the march of progress. Another point for consideration is that if such an amalgamation could be brought about, it would be considerably more to the advantages of the Hindus than the Mahommedans. The latter being in the minority and as yet a backward community, their interests would undoubtedly be subservient to those of the Hindus; and the marked progress they are now making as an independent people, would then remain in a state of arrested development. It may be well here forcibly to remind the Mahommedans that their political advancement is a very recent event; and due entirely to the Muslim League. Prior to this they were a scattered, helpless community, exploited by every political faction in India. The Muslim League has now united them in a common bond of brotherhood, and not only gained them many special communal advantages, but has made their voice heard for the first time in India, in England, and also throughout the Mahommedan countries of the world. This bears out my contention that the various races of India can only hope to advance when developing independently of each other.

It was in 1903 that I met that grand old Mahommedan gentleman, the late Nawab Mushir-ul-Mulk, one of the most farsighted and patriotic Mahommedans India has ever produced. He then, and many times subsequently confided in me his hopes and fears for his people. He felt that their scattered residence in India, the absence of a common ideal, and their helplessness as a political body rendered them an easy prey to political agitators; and in their ignorance of consequences, the rising generation at the time were coquetting with sedition and forgetting their own interests as Mahommedans. He considered that unless some remedial measures were at

once applied, the Mahommedan cause in India would be lost for ever. It was then that I placed before him my belief regarding the regeneration of India on a racial and communal basis, and I strongly advised him to form a Mahommedan Association or League that would separate the interests of his co-religionists from those of other communities around them; and that at once the association was established, a deputation of its leading members should wait on the Viceroy and if necessary on the Secretary of State for India, to represent the hopes and disabilities of his people. I suggested at the time that the association should be called the Indian Mahommedan League; and he enthusiastically exclaimed, 'No? it must be the Indian *Muslim* League; and I shall travel about India, and consult all the leading Mahommedans on the subject.' It took two or three years for the scheme to mature; then one day we met again, and he proudly announced the formation of the League, adding : 'Now my brethren are saved and whatever happens in India we shall always be able to hold our own, with the help of God.' Thus was the great League formed, and everybody is aware of all that it has achieved for the Mahommedans of this country. Let those who guide its destinities beware of how they use their trust. To, in any way, weaken the independence of the Muslim League at this juncture would not only be political suicide, but a crime in the annals of Mahommedan history.

Source : The Pioneer, 2 January 1911.

7

LETTER FROM HAMID ALI KHAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER ON HINDUS AND MAHOMMEDANS

22 January 1911

I am very sorry to learn that there are already afloat in the air suppressed murmurs of misgiving as to the success of the steps taken by Sir William Wedderburn, H.H. The Āga Khan and the Right Hon. Mr. Syed Amir Ali to bring about reconciliation between Hindus and Mahommedans. Whether they succeed or unfortunately fail, they have, I believe, taken a step in the right direction. To use the words of my friend, Nawab Sadiq Ali Khan of Lucknow, spoken at the last Congress—'We are face to face with a political situation in this country, which urgently demands that the two communities must sink their class and religious differences and stand shoulder to shoulder, if they want to obtain certain privileges, which no Government will ever (note these words) grant to a divided people. 'It cannot be too forcibly or too often repeated that union between Hindus and Mahommedans is a consummation devoutly to be wished and *without which the real progress of India*

is impossible, and that our Government will find the task of Governing India far more difficult and perplexing if we are constantly fighting and cutting each other's throat.

Reconciliation seems to me a very easy matter. We Hindus and Mahommedans, are agreed on almost all political questions - the difference of opinion, however, being in regard to the latter's share in the services and their representation on the Councils, and Municipal and District Boards. It passes my comprehension that these two very simple and ordinary questions should stand in the way of the union between the *educated* Hindus and Mahommedans. We call ourselves *educated*, but we are in reality far worse than the uneducated and the ignorant, for the latter are infinitely more united. If we cannot settle the differences between ourselves as it were out of course, we ought to be ashamed of ourselves. Is the question that the Hindus and Mahommedans should secure a *few more posts* in Government service or *a few more seats* by election on the Councils, etc., than each is inclined to allow the other so important after all that it is given precedence over a matter of so vital an importance as the union between the two communities? If we cannot settle such simple and easy matters between ourselves, then, I say we do not at all deserve the rights and privileges we desire. By such conduct we prove our utter incompetency, and I for one can go so far as to say that Government will not be wrong—rather they will be justified—if they refuse to entrust to us those functions and duties which demand great responsibilities, even handed justice and freedom from prejudice and partiality. However, we must not despair we must go on hammering at union. Let us learn to labour and to wait.

I cannot close without adding that it has given me sincere pleasure to learn from my Hindu friends that the Hindu gentlemen present at the peace meeting at Allahabad were much impressed with the personality of H. H. the Aga Khan, his abilities, tact and courtesy etc.

Source : The Pioneer, 27 January 1911.

8

LETTER FROM ACTION FRONT TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER ON HINDUS AND MAHOMMEDANS

9 February 1911

In your issue of the 27th ultimo a letter appeared with the above heading, under the signature of Mr. Hamid Ali Khan, who makes the following statement, an extraordinary one for a Mahommedan, *viz.* 'It cannot be too

forcibly or too often repeated that union between Hindus and Mahommedans is a consummation devoutly to be wished, and without which the real progress of India is impossible, 'From the above it is quite evident that the writer is not a student of history, more especially Indian history and that he has not understood the causes that let to the rise and fall of the Mahommedan Empire in this country. The Mahommedans conquered India, not with the help of the indigeneous races, but by their own strong arm, and their own intrinsic merits; and when they were at the zenith of their power they were a people apart from the Hindus. There was no question in those days of 'union', no pitiful wail for help from the latter. Long residence in India, however, gradually reduced their virility, and as in proportion they mingled with the Hindu population, so their power declined; and the last of Mogul Emperors was actually a puppet in Mahratta hands : and then followed the final disappearance of the Mahommedan heritage in India. It is only lately that the Mahommedans have fully realised their own deplorable degradation, and it is only since they have combined among themselves and formed the Muslim League, that they have begun to rise once more as a self-respecting position in this country, they must definitely make up their minds to work out their own salvation *separately* and *independently* of all the other races and religions that surround them.

In other portion of his letter it is surprising to hear Mr. Hamid Ali Khan say, 'the Hindus and Mahommedans are agreed on almost all political questions'. Had he used the verb *disagreed*, he would have been much nearer the truth, for the points of political disagreement are infinitely more numerous between the two great divisions of the Indian population. He, like other Indians, does not understand that political disagreement need not necessarily mean personal or racial hostility, as it is quite possible wholly to disagree on political principles, and yet be otherwise on the friendliest terms with one's opponents. It surely does not require 'union' and individual or political effacement in order to arrive at a friendly settlement, for instance, on social business, and industrial questions ? So, instead of meekly begging for union, it will be wiser and more dignified for the Mahommedans to pursue a course of independent self-development With a respectful friendliness for all outside their fold. The Mahommedans have everything to lose and nothing to gain by amalgamation with other peoples. The Hindus, on the other hand, having a preponderating numerical superiority, are making every effort to efface Mahommedan independence; for once the latter disappear as a separate political entity, Hindu political domination must be supreme.

It is sad to see the various races in India wasting their opportunities of advancement by begging each other's help instead of each race striking out an independent course of its own, towards the goal of political autonomy. Verily there is no pride of race, and no real patriotism in India. We have much inflated talk about the imaginary 'Indian nation', but never anything really convincing about the land of one's birth or the home of one's people.

The climax of absurdity is reached when we hear the Bengali at Lahore and the Mahratta at Madras solemnly talking of these respective places as 'this, our beloved motherland !' These universal patriots out here are very much on a par with our own contemptible Little England or who glories in loving every other country but his own.

To my Indian friends of many races my sincere advice is to drop all pretence of an 'Indian nation', and cease begging each other's help. Such action makes you appear ridiculous in European eyes, and exposes your weakest characteristics. Instead concentrate your efforts on your own particular home-land, and develop its own natural resources. Love your own people, and cherish your own language, religion and national traditions. Stand firmly on your own feet, and do not crawl round, begging other races to help you upward. Union is necessary, but it must be union *among your own people*, and not with others. If you cannot independently work out your own salvation, you will stegnate, and fall back among the survival of the fittest only helps those who help themselves.

Source **: The Pioneer, 9 February 1911.**

9

LETTER FROM HAMID ALI KHAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER ON HINDUS AND MAHOMMEDANS

11 February 1911

Some of my distinguished countrymen and the *Oudh Akhbar* in a leading article, warmly appreciated the views I had expressed in the *Pioneer* of the 27th ultimo, as to the union between the Hiudus and Mussulmans, and assured me that there prevaild perfect harmony about them. 'Action Front', however, strikes a note of discord in your issue of the 9th instant.

I pass by unnoticed personal remarks such as that I am 'not a student of history, more specially Indian history', I have 'not understood the causes that led to the rise and fall of Mahommedan Empire in this country', I, 'like other Indians', do 'not understand that political disagreement need not necessarily mean personal or racial hostility', etc., and come straight on the point.

'Action Front' is pleased to attack two statements of mine namely, that union between Hindus and Mussulmans is essential and that they are agreed upon almost all political questions.

As to the first I need hardly say that living in peace and no cordial or friendly terms with one's neighbour is infinitely preferable to quarrelling with him or breaking or trying to break his head. Political disagreement in this country has resulted in personal and racial hostility, and experience proves

that 'to disagree on political principles and yet be otherwise on the friendliest terms with one's opponents' is not, as a rule, practised in this country. Take things as they are and not as they must have been or might be or exist in other countries, for instance, in England.

The plant of hostility and disunion between the educated (so-called educated would be more appropriate) Hindus and Mussulmans, as seen at present, is of recent growth. In my student days, about thirty years ago, we never heard of its existence between the educated members of the two great communities; and the friendships then formed stand on such firm and solid fundations as have withstood the strong and vehement currents of animosity, which now prevails among the so-called educated Hindus and Mahommedans. Happily such is not the case with the older generation. Go to any town or village where men of political education and views are conspicuous by their absence, or have little or no influence, and you will find there Hindus and Mussulmans far more united, on much better friendly terms and living in harmony and peace. Fortunately the plague of hostility and disunion is at present confined to the so-called educated Hindus and Mussulmans only, though it threatens the unaffected area. I am of opinion that union between Hindus and Mussulmans is essential. If I err, I err in distinguished company, vide the address of the Hon. Mr. Syed Amir Ali read at the session of the Moslem League held at Delhi in January 1910, the inaugural address by H. H. the Aga Khan delivered at the session of the Moslem League held at Delhi in January 1910 and the memorable words of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan 'if united, we can support each other, if not, the effect of one against the other will tend to the destruction and downfall of both.'

Now, a word as to the other statement that the Hindus and Mahommedans are agreed on almost all political questions. It is impossible, within the space at my command, even to allude to all the subjects upon which there is agreement between us, but I may be permitted to mention one or two by way of example. Take, for instance, the separation of the Judicial from the Executive, the admission of Indians in larger numbers into the higher branches of the public service, reasonable reduction of military expenditure without endangering efficiency, the grant of commissions in the army to Indians, an equitable adjustment of home charges, establishment and development of village unions for the disposal of petty civil and criminal cases, promotion of commerce and industry, improvement of agriculture etc. etc., 'Here', in the eloquent words of H. H. the Aga Khan 'indeed is a wide field of work for Hindus and Mahommedans acting together in forwarding practical measures that must tend to the permanent welfare of the country.'

I, therefore, implore my brethren not to waste their time, money and energy over, say, the controversy whether a few posts or a few seats should or should not be allowed to the Mussulmans, and to settle such differences themselves without troubling the Government always bearing in mind these weighty words of H. H. the Agha Khan 'that unless Hindus and

Mahommedans co-operate with each other in the general development of the country as a whole...neither will develop to the full its legitimate aspirations or give full scope to its possibilities.

Source: The Pioneer, 24 February 1911.

10

LETTER FROM MUSHIR HOSAIN KIDWAI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING HINDUS AND MAHOMMEDANS

15 February 1911

I have read with pain the long letter of 'Action Front' in the columns of your paper urging the Mussulmans of India to keep *Separate* 'from all the other races and religions that surround them.' 'ACTION FRONT' misreads the past Muslim history of India to mislead the Indian Muslims of to-day. He conveniently forgets the immortal personality of the great Emperor Akbar who, while raising the Muslim Mogul Empire to the highest pinnacle of glory and 'to the zenith of praise', tried his best to *Unify* the two great communities of India who than stood to one another not in the present relationship of sister-communities bound by fraternal ties, but that of the conquerors and conquered a cohesion which it required a greater magnanimity, self-control and zeal to affect. He wants to deprive the Muslims of the undying glory of evolving for the first time in the forty-centuries old history of the caste-ridden, heterogeneous India one Indian nation. He would like the Mussulmans of India to disregard the spirit of their tolerent faith and to be independent of the policy of their own brothers abroad who have made their watchword 'Union and Progress'. He, like all other Europeans, misunderstands and undervalues the intrinsic merits of Islam and fears 'Hindu political supreme domination' in case the Mussulmans 'amalgamate' with other people. But those mussulmans who are aware of the all–dominating power of their universal faith, their high civilization, their advanced social laws and their virile constitution are confident that if they unite themselves even with such intellectual people, proud of their own hoary philosophy and culture, as the Hindus are, they will, in spite of being in the minority, be yet able to take the lead provided they do not depart from their own principles. The Islamic history of Europe, Asia and Africa is a witness of the fact that Mussulmans wherever they went, even as conquerors, 'amalgamated' freely with the natives of the land without any prejudice of colour, race and religion, yet kept up their national *Prestige* as long as they followed their own traditions and principles, I, personally, have such a great faith in the unrivalled democratic and advanced religious, social, economical and political principles of Islam,

that I am confident of their ultimate triumph all over the world, and I would beg 'ACTION FRONT' to leave the Muslims, who, I believe have passed the age of grand-motherly admonitions, alone to such of their leaders H.H. the Agha Khan, who seem now to have discovered their mistake and are trying to give up the policy of separation. Being a European 'ACTION FRONT' ought to know that difference in religion can be no obstacle in the way of nationalization of the citizens of one country, under one administration, with one political ambition. The exalted honour of Islam demands that its followers should adopt ideals of political liberty and not depend on favouritism or special concessions for their political strength; the tradition of the 'religion of peace' calls for political union with sister communities. It is a disgrace for the Mussulmans to float on their past greatness and to adopt a separatist policy for their present and slavish ideals for their future. The sooner they learn the stern fact that the future of nation depends upon its merits and not upon *bukhshis*, the better it will be for the community.

Although a staunch pan-Islamist I am firmly convinced that the good of my co-religionists in India depends upon their union with the sister communities. Through your kindness I have had the honour of advocating the policy of union to my co-religionists several times before, and I hope that now that they have seen what a sorry figure most of their representatives in the councils have cut and how harmfully the ill-will between the two communities has been accentuated, they will magnanimously admit their mistake in adopting a separatist poilcy. I would draw the attention of 'Action Front' and of those Mussulmans who may still hold the old views, to my letter in the *Pioneer* which appeared in its issue of the 24th March 1909, showing the defects of the policy of separate elections. I would also add that the smooth administration of the country depends upon mutual harmony and good-will between the citizens of the country and, therefore, those who really wish well of the country and the communities should refrain from advocating any policy of political or educational separation.

Source : The Pioneer, 26 February 1911.

11

LETTER FROM KARRI KARRI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER ON HINDUS AND MAHOMMEDANS

16 February 1911

We were all surprised to read the letter under the above heading of 'Action Front' in the *Pioneer* of the 9th instant. It is most inopportune, coming as it does at a time when the leaders of the two communities are

trying their best to bring about mutual reconciliation, and the Government is particularly anxious to see the growth of a healthy feeling of co-operation and good-will amongst its subjects. 'Action Front' is ignorant of the fact that Government have to govern both the communities, and govern them equally. So that as soon as 'Action Front's' cherished superiority of his race over the others comes, if it comes at all, and the time for the 'Mahommedans' dignified course of *self-development*' arrives, other races are sure to be listened to, as his race is listened to now.

We cannot help observing that if Mr. Hamid Ali Khan is not a student of History, 'Action Front' does not know the antecedents of his own Indian race. 'The Mahommedans conquered India not with the help of indigenuous races but by their own strong arm' and 'they were a people apart from the Hindus', and 'long residence in India reduced their virility', and 'as in proportion they mingled with the Hindu population, so their power declined' are true so far as they go. Let 'Action Front', however, take a census of the Indian Mahommedans, who could satisfactorily connect themselves on both sides to the pure Assyrian, Arabian, Turk, Persian or Afghan. We know that Indian Mahommedans are mainly converts from the Hindu labouring classes such as the cultivator or the weaver who have as time rolled by, and their origin been lost in antiquity, risen grade by grade, from Sheikh Momin to Sayyads. Barring, therefore, their religion, they are sons of Indian soil, and in every other respect could very well, and must finally be welded into one with the rest of the Indian population.

Source : The Pioneer, 16 February 1911.

12

LETTER FROM 'R.' TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING HINDUS AND MUSSULMANS

27 February 1911

The letter of 'Action Front' and Mr. Hamid Ali Khan rejoinder have raised questions which are fit for mental study and after careful cogitation, I have come to the conclusion; that the former might have acted on the saying 'if speech is silver, silence is gold'. I admit that his views have been propounded with the best of intentions and with very honest motive, but they are liable to misconstruction and misconception. Some Indians can, after reading his letter, conclude that he wants to see the Hindus and Mussulmans quarrelling, bickering ? and fighting in order that their difference may give political advantages to the rulers. To a right-minded man the above conclusion will obviously be unreasonable and wrong, but some minds can have a ground

for the misconstruction noted above. This, however, is only a side issue and has no bearing on the questions whether unity between the Hindus and Mahommedans is really essential, and whether both the great creeds are agreed upon almost all political questions which affect India.

It goes without saying that peace and union of heart and action are most adorable things, not only in political matters but even in ordinary social affairs. But can this peace and union be actually attained in this prosaic world by persons of different creeds, sects and races? If emotion and sentiment be the only ruling and guiding powers, if prejudice and sectarian partiality cease to exist and if one's eyes are shut to what is actually happening all round on earth at present, then certainly union and peace can be secured; otherwise they find a place in sweet and happy dreams only, when the great and glorious though misguided Joan Jacques gave shape and colour to his three 'mmortal goddesses, 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity', that great French man, Turgot, in his clear eyed intelligence, said 'Liberty—I answer with a sigh, may be that man are not worthy of thee; Equality—they would yearn after thee, but cannot attain thee', Does not the above apply with equal force to peace and union where divergent creeds are concerned and when the human mind has to be taken as it exists with its different manifestations? I admire the motives of H.H. the Aga Khan, Sir William Wedderburn, the great Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other minor lights who are preaching for union which practically is tantamount to Fraternity; but you may possibly attain it if the deep mental obscurity in which the majority of Indians is sunk at present, is removed and a new day dawns. I think it was the high souled Mill who, whilst giving due credit to the grand and sublime imagination of the greatest of modern poets, Victor Hugo, remarked that he never brought forward one single practical proposal for the improvement of the society against which he was incessantly thundering. This, I submit, applies equally to the great men of India who desire a political union between the two creeds. Committees, no doubt, have been formed, but here they stand. No practical proposals have been made and carried out, and if anything has been done, it has been effected in a contrary direction. Look at the action of the Hon'ble Mr. Malaviya who, just after his allegiance to the committee of peace and union, formed under the auspicies of the great leaders of India, put up a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council which touched the Mussulman deeply and sorely to the core of his heart, and this showed that creed and sect were factors too potent to allow the prejudices of the human heart to be absolutely obliterated.

So long as the two parties have different religious beliefs political union is impossible; what is considered sacred by one is the object of religious sacrifice and merit of the other. Whilst one has his interests confied only to India, the other has political and religious links connected with nations outside India. Whilst one is just awakening from a state of depression of several hundred years the other is still sensible of what it was a hundred and fifty years ago. Hence true union is impossible and as a consequence how can it be considered

essential for the political aggrandisement of both the parties? The platform of Indian action is different from that of the Indus. I admit that 'Action Front' is wrong when he says that 'political disagreement need not necessarily mean personal or racial hostility.' As Mr. Hamid Ali says, the above may be true for Europe but is certainly not true in reference to India, where on account of difference in creed, race and sect, and on account of want of proper education of the masses, and the consequent want of development of feelings of charity and self-restraint, any kind of difference leads to acts of personal evidence and hostility. The views of 'Action Front' regarding the 'causes that led to the rise and fall of the Mahommedan Empire in this country 'are also open to serious refutation, but these may not be discussed here as they involve questions too big to be handled in a letter. However, I agree with 'Action Front' that union is not essential for acquiring political rights, for it is impossible of attainment. It may be necessary for absolute self-government but no sane man can want this in the present condition of India.

As to the second question, whether both the parties are agreed upon almost all political questions, I can only say that they are agreed on some, as pointed out by Mr. Hamid Ali, but there are other points on which they cannot agree. The following are some of these :

1. Simultaneous examination in India for the I.C.S. Examination.
2. Bestowal of Government appointments in proportion to the numerical strength of the parties.
3. The *Bakr-Id sacrifices*.
4. Separation of electorates for the Municipal and the District Boards.

In fact there can be no union where difference in above matters seems incapable of being made up. Again, when what actually one is not acceptable to the other, then union is certainly neither possible nor essential. Each party can ask what are its reasonable wants and it may happen that some demands may equally benefit both Hindus and Mussulmans whilst others may suit one or the other of the parties only.

It must not be understood that whilst I advocate that each creed must have its own political body, I mean that the two should not be conciliated on the general principles of action; for this, if done, will reduce to a minimum acts of personal hostility and violence. In this conciliation the governing bodies should be included, and then when a broad-minded view is taken of different matters affecting the real welfare of India, united efforts may be made for what is beneficial to all, and where differences exist, each party must be left to work out its own ends.

It must be taken as a postulate that the great leaders of both parties do not want any conciliation, perfect union being impossible, with a view to opposing Government and its actions. They want it, as I understand for the real good of the country, and if such is the case, they, either singly or combined together (supposing this to be possible), cannot succeed without making Government itself the initiator of proposals likely to be of material advantage

politically to India, and this can only be secured when both Hindus and Mussulmans keep in their mind that, as honest and loyal citizens, their first duty is to see how the ill-feeling which in some Provinces admittedly exists between the English and some of the indigenous races is removed if any union is really essential and possible it is union in this respect. Secure this object, and then possibly you may, at some future date realise Sir William Wedderburn's watch word 'Hope, Conciliation and United Effort' in matters which are of common advantage to both Hindus and Mussulmans. There can, however, be no united effort in matters which, form political considerations, differently affect the two creeds.

Source : The Pioneer, 9 March 1911.

13

THE TRIBUNE ON HINDU-MAHOMMEDAN RELATIONS

The recent war in the Balkan and the repeated reverses sustained by the Turks have deeply stirred the feelings of the entire Moslem world.... The Hindu attitude has generally been one of entire sympathy with the Mahommedans in the present crisis. This has been most marked in Bengal where not only Hindu speakers at public meetings openly expressed sympathy with Turkey which is rightly regarded as an Asiatic Powers but the Hindu community translated their feelings into action by subscribing liberally to the funds of Red Crescent Society......The better feeling exists between the two for last several years. These strained relations were mostly in U.P. and the Punjab. The first complaint is as regarding the inadequate representation of the Hindus in the Punjab and Supreme Legislative Council. Then there is a strong feeling in the Punjab that in the public services the claims of Hindus are not fully recognised. In U.P. the same claim prevailed....circumstanced as they are both Hindus and Mahommedans must put away the thought from their minds that they can achieve greatness independently of one another...., Hindus and Mahommedans must stand or fall together and if the love of the motherland is a living reality for both Hindus and Mahommedans they will allow nothing to come between them or to divide them one from the other.

Source : The Tribune, 6 December 1912.

14

CIRCULAR LETTER FROM MIAN MOHAMMAD SHAFI ON INTER-COMMUNAL UNITY AND CO-OPERATION TO ALL THE PAPERS

The manner in which the message of inter-communal peace and goodwill contained in my address and embodied in a formal resolution passed at the Annual Sessions of the All-India Muslim League has been received constitutes a happy augury for the cause of inter-communal co-operation, so essential for the regeneration of our people. With the exception of three or four Hindu and Mahommedan news papers in the Punjab, the representative organs of the various Indian communities all over the country have welcomed the approaching dawn of a new era—an era, I trust, of peace and goodwill, bringing about immediate co-operation in most and ultimate unity of purpose in respect of all the vital problems, a proper solution of which is the only key to the future regeneration of our mother-land under the aegis of the British Crown.

A number of Hindu friends, themselves advocates of Indian nationalism, have informed me of the prevalence, among certain circles of an impression that the policy of inter-communal co-operation proclaimed by the Muslim League is not the result of a spontaneous and genuine desire to bring about Hindu-Mahommedan entente for the good of the country, but is the outcome of Muslim resentment at the disastrous consequences of the Balkan War upon our Turkish coreligionists. Whatever may have been the effect of the Turkish crisis upon the political view point in certain Indian Mussulman Circles, I can positively affirm that the desire, among the great Moderate section of our community, to devise practical steps to bring about inter-communal harmony and bridge over the gulf which divides the two sister communities, particularly in Upper India, resulting in infinite harm to the communities themselves and in serious administrative complications for the Government has nothing whatever to do with the events which have recently taken place in the Near East.

It is an undeniable fact that the gulf which divides the two sister communities is wider in the Punjab than in any other Province. Casting our glance backward to events which took place over two years ago, it will be remembered that the controversy then raging in the columns of the Hindu and the Mahommedan Press in this Province, almost without exception was taking a religious turn. In view of the serious consequences involved in this grave trend of affairs, Mr. Justice Shah Din invited the attention of local Hindu and Mahommedan leaders to the urgent need for action. About that time the late Mr. Malabari visited Lahore and, at a social gathering in the house of a mutual friend, the problem was, at his instance, again discussed in all its bearings, but owing to the exigencies of active steps in this connection. On

the 14th November 1911, the Right Hon'ble Mr. Amir Ali wrote to me, from London a letter during the course of which he said : 'The growing differences between Hindus and Mahommedans are feeling me with the deepest concern, and I have come to the conclusion that I should make some efforts to bring out a *modus vivendi* by which the two communities may work together for the common good whilst retaining their communal existence and communal rights.' He gave a brief sketch of his proposals in that letter and asked me to cable to him my general approval, if I agreed with him. Not only did I communicate to him by telegram my own approval but also discussed the matter informally with some of the foremost leaders of the Indian Mussulmans assembled at Delhi in the month of December 1911. And when having been elected a Member of the Imperial Legislative Council about that time, I had to go to Calcutta in January-March 1912, I had conversations regarding this, all important question, with the Hon'ble Mr. G. K. Gokhale, the Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu, and other Hindu leaders. In fact I informed Mr. Gokhale that during his visit to England Mr. Amir Ali would probably have a talk with him in connection with this problem, and I know that certain conversations did take place between these two leaders and His Highness the Agha Khan before Mr. Gokhale's departure from England for South Africa. In March 1912, my friend Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Khan and I gave a lunch, at the Grand Hotel, to Mussulman leaders then assembled in Calcutta in connection with the 5th Anniversary of the All-India Muslim League, and at that gathering I initiated a discussion with regard, among other important problems, to the question of inter-communal co-operation on the basis suggested by Mr. Amir Ali, whose letter I read out to the assembly. These facts will make it absolutely clear that the message of inter-communal peace and goodwill issued by the League is the result of a movement originated two years ago, having nothing whatever to do with recent events outside India.

I am sincerely convinced that the only practical method of bringing about the desired co-operation is to start an organization for joint work in connection with those vital problems with reference to which we are already in agreement. To wait for the time when complete unanimity all along the line will have been reached is neither practical statesmanship nor patriotism. Partial co-operation will itself prove an effective instrument towards the bringing about the complete harmony. I earnestly appeal to all sincere well-wishers of the country—Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Parsi and Mahommedans—to take the scheme suggested by me into serious consideration. I, for one, am convinced that it embodies the only practical method of solving this all important problem.

Source : The Tribune, 18 April 1913.

15

LETTER FROM SIR WAZIR HASAN ON HINDU-MAHOMMEDAN CO-OPERATION

I have the honour to address you in connection with a matter of supreme importance and trust that you will be pleased to give to it your earnest and earliest attention.

As you are aware, the All-India Muslim League in its last Sessions has adopted the following resolution :

'That the All-India Muslim League places on record its firm belief that the future development and progress of the people of India depend on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities, and hopes that leaders on both sides will periodically meet together to find a *modus operandi* for joint and concerted action in questions of public good.'

It is now my duty, as an Honorary Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, to take steps towards the furtherance of the resolution just mentioned. The need for such a *modus operandi* as is suggested in the resolution cannot be exaggerated. It is a matter of great satisfaction that signs leading to real and cordial co-operation in the noble work before us are visible and feelings of sympathy towards the desired object pervade all the communities. It is obvious that we are bound to each other by ties of common nativity and progress of India must necess.. y mean the progress of all. It is a truism, therefore, that united we will be able to overcome all difficulties that lie in our path of reforms in the administration of India tending towards the realisation of our common goal for a system of self-government in this country under the aegis of the British Crown. In this connection I may draw your attention to circular letter issued by the Hon'ble Mian Mohammad Shafi, President of the last Sessions of the All-India Muslim League. I may be pardoned for considering it a matter of pride that the All-India Muslim League should have taken the first step towards this necessary and urgent question. I have, therefore, no doubt that my appeal to all of you will be met with a ready response and suggestions of practical utility will be offered. At present my idea is that four prominent members of each community from every province should meet together this year sometime early in September at Lucknow to discuss and settle the preliminaries to future organised action in this behalf.

Source : *The Indian Review*, June 1913.

16

THE COMRADE ON HINDU-MOSLEM RELATIONS

The most reassuring, as indeed the most impressive, feature of the Indian situation to-day is a general desire for some organised movement towards the growth of better relations between Hindus and Mussulmans. Efforts are being earnestly made for the establishment of 'Hindu-Moslem Leagues'. The Hon. Secretary of All-India Moslem League has thrown out a suggestion for the holding of a conference composed of prominent Hindu and Moslem leaders from every province. The fact is that a rare combination of circumstances has brought the Mussulmans and the Hindus into a frame of mind when they are eager to grasp at all suggestions towards mutual understanding and the peaceful adjustment of mutual differences. No such opportunity would recur for another generation if it is wasted in sheer talk. And because there are enormous risks that it may be wasted away, that we propose to briefly examine the situation and warn some thoughtless enthusiasts of the dangers that lie ahead.

Let us, in the first place, assume that the 'peace-makers' on either side realise the magnitude of their task. The problem is not merely one of creed antagonism. It is in its most forbidding aspect a problem of political rivalry to which history has lent its maddest passions. In the early days of British rule the outer aspect of affairs was tranquil with what might be called the tolerance of accepted things. Soon, however, the spirit of the British administration began to affect the lives and thoughts of the people. Western education has been a great blessing for India, but its benefits have not been without their price. It evoked in its earliest phase the race egotisms of the various Indian communities. A Hindu began to feel as if history had played his false. His race was once great and gifted. It was a humiliation to have to own that a more virile race entered India and left the impress of its strength and culture on her later history. A Mussulman felt as if he had been disinherited by some malign fate. He turned round and saw with resentment the races over which he had once held sway rising to importance and power. The whole spectacle seemed to be a one long, deliberate betrayal of his. He swore hard at things in general and conceived and unreasoning aversion towards the progressive Hindu community. The clash of interests in daily life and the fierce antagonisms and invectives to which it has given rise are mere matters of detail. The broad features of the problem should be faced unflinchingly if the future of India is to be rescued from the dead and paralysing hand of the past and the compounded follies of the present.

The mood of the two rival communities was never more favourable to the growth of a lasting unity of aim and purpose than it is to-day. Apart from some fortuitous circumstances which have temporarily accentuated the mood,

the latent, deep lying and more permanent forces, which are evolving a political personality out of the diverse Indian races, have been rapidly gaining in strength. But the danger is, lest by mistaking the accidental for the essential, efforts might be made to force the pace. An artificial union fed on no vital sentiment but on mere rhetoric-a make-believe studiously maintained to inflate platform perorations and press paragraphs and perhaps to humbug Bureaucracy is bound to end in disaster. Ours is as robust a faith in the future of Indian nationalism as any of the most ardent nationalists can have. But we know perfectly well that many an arduous step remains to be taken to ensure the growth of Indian unity. And it is for this reason that we wish the leaders on both sides to be on their guard lest they drown the problem in a deluge of words and mistake aspiration for achievement.

It is undoubtedly necessary to seize by the forelock the existing opportunity which a rare combination of circumstances has offered. But in doing so it is not necessary to take away at one sweep the entire symbols that stand for different communal standpoints. Any such attempts is bound to create suspicions. The supreme need of the situation is to foster confidence in mutual good-will and sincerity of motive. This can best be done by multiplying points of contact in daily life and increasing opportunities for political co-operation. The joint Hindu-Moslem meeting held recently at Lahore on the question of the separation of judicial and executive functions has a real significance and should point the way for future efforts. Some impatient and tactless persons in the Hindu press have asked the Mussulmans to give up their adhesion to the principle of communal representation as a mark of their good-will towards the Hindus. Nothing can be more calculated to sow suspicion at this stage than such demands. We have never concealed our opinion that separate electorates are at present an undesirable necessity in the political evolution of the country. It is in the power of the Hindus alone to convince the Mussulmans that the necessity no longer exists. Let the feeling take root in the country that the patriotism of the Hindu patriot has ceased to be communal and exclusive and the safeguards of the minorities will fall away as useless encumbrances. It is for the strong to cultivate forbearance and convince the weak that the latter can trust him. To ask him to throw off his protecting armour at the first friendly encounter would surely be disastrous to the ultimate interests of both.

Mixed leagues and conferences may do some good and clear the ground for a correct estimate of the position. But we confess we distrust the spirit of bargain that sometimes invades such formal gatherings. Real goodwill only comes out of a genuine conversion to a true political faith. Every effort should, therefore, be made to increase opportunities for social contact between Hindus and Mussulmans. Joint social clubs have been tried, but have often failed in the past. That is no reason why they should not be tried again. But whatever device may be adopted to bring Hindus and Moslems together socially, we trust every clearsighted advocate of Hindu-Moslem union will realise that all

loud and importunate talk on the subject must absolutely cease. Senseless volubility is not an exclusive weakness of either Hindus or Mussulmans. But it is certain that it can seldom promote a good cause while it often succeeds in becoming a fertile source of friction. We trust the Mussulmans at any rate will show their genuine desire for the promotion of goodwill and cordial relations between the two communities by sincere, straightforward acts in daily life. For at least a period of six months they should impose aboslute silence on themselves. Let the bickering about trifles cease on their part. Even if they feel they have a genuine grievance let them bear it up without uttering a word. Let their Press note with approval the acts of mutual goodwill and leave alone the petty incidents that merely tend to divide. If they are capable of this degree of self-control even for a short period they would make a great moral conquest of themselves, free the atmosphere from strife and disarm criticism. If the ideals of self-government and nationality are worth striving for, much will have to be sacrificed, including the pride and egotism of race, the glory of self-assertion, the greed of selfishness and the joy of racial battle. It is glorious to die for sake of these ideals, but it is still more glorious to live worthily up to them and bring them nearer to realisation by silent ceaseless and patient toil. Those of the Hindus and the Mussulmans who by some word or deed free but one heart from the grip of prejudice and sterlising convention would not have deserved well of their country.

Source : The Comrade, 31 May 1913.

17

THE HON. MR. MAZHAR-UL-HAQUE ON HINDU-MUSLIM CO-OPERATION

The subject that I have decided to speak upon is my own favourite subject of the relations of the two great communities of India. I have long studied this question, in all its details and all its bearings, and I am firmly convinced that the progress, the advancement and the ultimate regeneration of our motherland depends upon the solution of this question. If India is ever to become a nation, all her children must work harmoniously with the sole object of raising the standard of civilization within her boundaries.

There can be no Indian nationalism and for the matter of that no Indian nation unless and until all the communities approach Indian problems from the point of view of an Indian nationalist. By an Indian nationalist I mean one who has the sole good of his country at heart and who does not exclude any one from the category of Indians, because of the accidents of caste and

creed. This idea has been the guiding spirit of my political life. In my own humble way I have worked for its realisation. However, I am free to confess that all these weary years that I have been working, I believed that I was ploughing the sands and that my ideas would ever remain in the realm of dreams without being translated into actualities, during the short span of life that is still left to me.

But what is the spectacle that I see before me to-day; and that also in one of the cities of a province which—pardon my frankness—was acquiring an unenviable notoriety for Hindu-Mussulman difference. I see all the leading men of the two communities assembled on this platform, and the masses in their thousands ready to speak and vote unanimously on some of the most burning topics of the day. This is the happy sign of the times and is the sure harbinger of better days coming. Political movements are catching and once given a fair start they grip the whole country in no time. Last year I said on the Congress platform in my own native town of Bankipore, that a party of liberal Mussulmans had arisen who believed in the cause advocated by the Indian National Congress and who were determined to work with their Hindu brethern. This party has not only arisen but has already conquered the entire body of the followers of Islam. He would be a bold and courageous Mussulman indeed who in a public meeting of his co-religionists would speak against the aims and objects of our great National organisation. The anti-Congress Mussulman is fast becoming an extinct species and will have soon to be searched for in some archaeological museum.

What are the causes of this sudden, radical and almost revolutionary change in Muslim sentiments and feelings ? The causes are numerous and various but it would not only be entirely out of place, but positively wrong for me to enter into them before a Cawnpore audience in which the Mussulmans count by thousands. These I reserve for another audience and for an occasion where the atmosphere is less electrical. However, I may point out the one reason which to my mind has been the real factor in bringing about this change—a reason which I grasped long ago and which made me persist in my efforts, in spite of numerous discouragements, to bring about the unity of Hindus and Mussulmans. This is the great and glorious tradition of Islam. Truthfulness, independence and toleration are qualities writ in large and golden letters on the pages of Islamic history and any one who can run may read them.... It was impossible for a people with such traditions not to be affected by the liberal movements of the age. For a time no doubt they were dazzled by the ideas of special interests and of special favours, but time brought its own revenge and they found out that what they were so much enamoured of were mere shadowy phantoms. What they could not once conceive they are perceiving now.

Gentlemen, let me pause here for a moment and examine the so-called interests of the different communities of India. What are they and where are they ? I have searched and searched in vain to find out even one question on

which these interests clash. I mean the true and permanent interests and not merely the temporary and passing ones. Look for instance at the questions that you are going to discuss this ofternoon. They are four in number two of which deal with provincial and the other two with Indian topics. Can any one in this vast assembly get up and conscientiously say that his interests will be jeopardised by passing of any of these resolutions ? I am positive that there is none here.

Take the two provincial resolutions. One deals with the formation of the Executive Council for these provinces. I have already given my whole-hearted support to it in the Imperial Council and I need not say much about it but I am sure that you will agree with me that if there had been an Executive Council with an Indian member, no matter whether he was a Hindu or a Mahommedan, some of the recent regrettable events would never have been allowed to occur. The other resolutions deal with the all-important question of education. If anything, the Muslim community stands to gain more than any other community, by the extension of education in these provinces. The two resolutions which deal with Indian questions are such that there is and there can be no difference of opinion amongst any section of the Indian people. The separation of executive and judicial functions will do as much good to the Mussulmans as to the Hindus. Purity of justice is as beneficial and necessary for the one as for the other. Both are affected equally now, and both will be benefited equally if the two functions are separated. As to our treatment in the colonies it is a long-standing grievance and the sooner it is redressed the better for the interests of the great Empire to which we are so proud to belong.

Similarly you will find that there is hardly any question in the entire field of Indian politics wherein the interests of the two communities are not identical. What is required is that we should approach these questions in the right spirit—in the spirit of moderation, of forbearance and of good-will. If every one insists upon having his pound of flesh there can be no political life in the country and we must bid good-bye for ever to the idea of evolving an Indian nationality. I am not over-looking the fact that sometimes situations do arise which bring about much heart-burning and create bad blood between the different communities of India. But I see no earthly reason why the differences should not be settled amicably. Surely a little tactful handling and toleration can achieved, much where an unbending and rigid attitude is bound to fail. We have numerous organisations in the country which could easily take up all controversial questions and settle them by bringing a little gentle pressure to bear upon the people at large. For instance we have the Muslim League and the Hindu Sabha which could most certainly settle all differences between the two communities by mutual friendly discussion. Then we have a common platform in the Indian National Congress upon which the people of India could stand together and work for the common good of their common motherland. Again we have our local and imperial councils

where the people and the Government could co-operate with each other. Indeed, this co-operation is, in my humble opinion, the only method by which our country can ever expect to advance. If the Government pull on one side and the people on the other, whilst the different communities inhabiting India wrangle among themselves over some perty privileges and advantages the orderly administration of the country will cease and general chaos will be the result. Please bear in mind that by co-operation I do not mean subserviency as some people take it to mean. I believe in honest self-respecting and manly co-operation which will solve most of the difficulties arising in the country.

I conclude by appealing to all my countrymen to make up their differences and work together like brothers in the cause of their motherland. To my Muslim brethren throughout India I appeal to join the forthcoming session of the Indian National Congress which is going to be held at Karachi under the distinguished presidentship of my friend the Hon. Nawab Syed Mahomed in their hundreds and thousands and thereby show to the world that we Hindus and Mussulmans are one and united and nothing will separate us in serving our dear country.

Source : *The Indian Review*, September 1913.

18

THE HINDU-MOSLEM 'ENTENTE CORDIALE'

At the dawn of the present cycle, one great event marks out the happy augury of the future progress for India or rather Indian nationality and that is the increasing greater concern for each of the two leading communities—Hindu and Moslem to shake hands with each other in a spirit of brotherhood, forgetting or forgiving the past blundersome thoughts and actions of one against the other. Yes, in our every day experience, we find, two brothers occasionally fall out with each other—they even remain as if in two different camps for a time but if by chance a third person injures the interest of the common Mother, the two brothers forget their differences at once and holding each other's arms come to show a united front to the Mother's enemy....

The Karachi Congress afforded a great common platform to solidify the inceptive *entente cordiale* and by the fact of the President being a leading Mahommedan intent upon effecting such a compromise the process became easy and so productive of potent good.... The Karachi Congress was a great factor in giving birth to the new sentiment of brotherliness between the Hindu

and the Mahommedan brethren which alone is a consummation that the organisers devoutly wished for but time stood in the way so long....

Source : The Calcutta Spectator, January 1914.

19

HINDU-MUSLIM ENTENTE

It was some time ago that we noted with extreme pleasure the announcement that the Hon. Sir James Meston was willing to co-operate heartily if the Hindus and the Mussulmans of unfortunately the most disunited province, miscalled 'The United Provinces', met together in a conference for the purpose of discussing the Hindu-Muslim problem and invited His Honour to preside. Those were the days when we expected the millenium to be effectively ushered in during His Honour's quinquenium. Since then much water has flowed by the Sangam, and the millenium appears at least as distant as ever. To none has recent experience tasted more like gall and worm-wood than to ourselves, but it is not always possible to shatter the world into little bits and remould it after the heart's desire. We have, therefore, refrained from grumbling, and are quite content to pursue the same policy. But in public affairs only those can sit smiling like patience on a monument that feel public misfortunes less poignantly than their own trivial worries. If, therefore, we turn our attention to the affairs of the United Provinces, which is perhaps dearer to us than any other part of this sub-continent, it is because it would pain us atleast as much as any other person in the world to see the two great communities inhabiting the province drifting away still more from each other.

We are not so wedded to the doctrine of *Laissez-faire* in government that the least inclination on the part of the Administration to participate in the affairs of the people would appear to us to be the indication of some deep-laid plot against them. But it does seem to us somewhat odd that when no responsible representatives of the Hindus and the Mahommedans have called together a conference such as His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor suggested, and no one to our knowledge has invited Sir James Meston to preside. His Honour should go out of his way and himself call together such a conference under his own chairmanship. Surely he cannot be unaware of the suspicions to which publicity has already been given by some vernacular papers which have since been punished for it under the Press Act. In the face of these circumstances it is an extremely courageous act to take the initiative in such a matter. But if Sir James Meston is determined to show to the

world the utter baselessness of such suspicions, by himself doing that which he had at first suggested to others, and which they have hitherto failed to do, and is confident of bringing the Hindus and the Mussulmans closer to each other than they have been in the past, then we must say he has done the right thing, and whosoever admires courage, determination and self-reliance would feel great respect and genuine admiration for the bold policy of Sir James Meston. As this is the most favourable interpretation upon His Honour's action, we readily accept it, and it would be extremely unfair to him if by any comment of ours we prejudiced the conference which Sir James has called. In fact we pine for the result and care not who achieves it and how. The enterprise is admittedly and care not who achieves it and how. The enterprise is admittedly a difficult one, and if Sir James Meston carries it to a successful issue, no one will offer him a heartier tribute of praise and gratitude than ourselves.

But we hope we may be permitted to say this much, that although His Honour has included in the list of those invited to this conference practically every true representative of the Hindu community, his selection of the Mussulmans is one that does not augur well for the success of the conference. From the very first we have suggested to His Honour that he has placed wrong values on leading Mussulmans and has sought advice only from those that are prone to receive advice and accept advice without the least demur, and we are sorry to see that even after considerable experience in recent days Sir James Meston leans heavily on the old broken reed. We have learnt, though we cannot vouch for its accuracy, that the following gentlemen will represent the Mussulmans. The Hon. the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad, the Hon. the Raja Saheb of Jehangirabad, the Hon. the Raja Saheb of Pirpur, the Hon. Shaikh Shahid Hosain, the Hon. Mr. Abdur Raof, the Hon. Khwaja Ghulam-us-Saqlain, Nawab Mehdi Hosain, of Lucknow, Nawab Abdul Majid, C. I. E., Maulana Syed Karamat Hosain, Nawab Ishaq Khan, Nawab Ismail Khan and Mr. Hamid Ali Khan. These gentlemen have to confer with Mr. Bishan Narain Dar, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Hon. Pandit Sunder Lal, the Hon. Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, the Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Hon. Mr. Ganga Pershad Varma and some others. Without exaggerating the ability of these Hindu gentlemen, we can say that the Mahommedan gentlemen invited to confer with them are not likely to do justice to the community to which they belong in any discussion of rights and responsibilities. Most of them belong to the class beloved of the officials and known as the 'natural leaders of the people'. On the other hand, the Hindu gentlemen are not the 'natural', but the real, leaders of their community.

Passing to the omissions, nobody can fail to miss the name of the Hon. Syed Riza Ali, the only elected Mussulman member of the Council who is not invited. Without suggesting that no other elected member truly represents his community, we may say without fear of contradiction—except from the

uniformed or the perverse—that the Hon. Syed Riza Ali represents a very considerable body of Muslim opinion, and by dint of sheer ability has established for himself both in his profession and in public affairs a position second to none among the elected members of the U. P. Council. What is more, he can be trusted to be independent in the expression of his opinions and it is difficult to assign any reason for his omission which does not support the popular belief that Sir James Meston is not an admirer of his bold advocacy of the claims of his community. No less remarkable is the omission of the name of Mr. Syed Wazir Hasan, who is the chief executive officer of the All-India Muslim League, which, according to the recent Deputation to the Viceroy, 'has ever since its establishment continued to be the true representative organisation of Indian Mussulmans'. Now we fail to see what the Muslim League and its Secretary have done to merit this neglect. If it is the ideal of self-government suitable for India, then why has Sir James been so remarkably affectionate towards the National Congress Committee in Allahabad where the ideal of Colonial Self-Government was evolved even earlier ? Does His Honour think that self-Government suited to India is more inconsistent with the British connection than Colonial self-government, or that Mr. Wazir Hasan is less friendly to the English, say, than Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya or Mr. Varma ? Mr. Wazir Hasan has taken a prominent part in advocating a Hindu-Muslim *entente*, and, in fact, this is his chief crime in the eyes of a certain type of officials. To leave him out of such a conference requires an explanation other than the plea of inadvertance. Again, we miss the name of Mr. Syed Nabiullah, the President of an annual session of the All-India Muslim League. We do not find the name of Sahebzada Aftab Ahmed Khan in the list, though we have since learnt that he is likely to be asked. Mr. Alay Nabi is the President of the Provincial Muslim League, and we do not understand on what grounds he has been excluded. Can it be that our latest and youngest King-Maker, the very masterful Secretary of the Provincial League, refrained from nominating him ?

The Hon. the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad is no doubt there, and he is the solitary member in whom the majority of the Muslim community could put implicit faith. But his inclusion has not even the doubtful virtue of consistency, and we wonder whether he would be able to accomplish anything in the company of such strange bed-fellows as Dame Fortune has provided for him. We do not know whether this goodly dozen of the 'natural leaders' of the Mussulmans would be able to get any section of the Mussulmans to abide by their decision except that which, like them, has the great quality of abiding by the decisions of every officer of the Government. It was superfluous to invite them to this conference when the decision of the Government itself would have proved equally efficacious with the section of *Jo-hookams* in the Muslim community.

We do not know what procedure the conference would follow, but all the Hindus and the Mussulman alike await the result of its deliberations. What

we fear is that the conference would not be able to influence the attitude of any Mussulmans towards the Hindus, and it is proves abortive, it may be advertised as another indication of the hopelessness of unity between the two communities and of the absolute necessity of an impartial European arbitrator with the fullest powers to prevent breaches of peace and 'to hold the balance even'. But this is by no means the worst of our fears. An abortive conference may possibly strain the relations of the two communities still further and may well take rank with the Ajudhiya and Agra troubles of last year. *Absit omen.*

Source: The Comrade, 4 April 1914.

20

RESOLUTION PASSED AT AN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING OF THE MOSLEM LEAGUE OF U. P. HELD AT AGRA

24 December 1914

Considering that the difference between the two communities be minimised as much as possible this League regrets that the *Leader* (daily) of Allahabad should have thought it fit to publish letters giving by no means a true statement of facts in connection with the last Bakraeed riots at Farrukhabad, to the prejudice of the Mussulman public and the Mussulman officials of the place, and it relies upon the Government as it has always done for the protection of the Mussulman interest in that connection.

Source: The Pioneer, 2 January 1915.

21

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF MR. MAZHAR-UL-HAQUE AT THE EIGHTH SESSION OF ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE, HELD AT BOMBAY

30 December 1915

Please accept my sincere and heartfelt thanks for the great honour you have done me by electing me the President of the All-India Muslim League this year. It is a proud privilege to preside over and guide the deliberations of this distinguished gathering, where representatives of seventy millions of His

Britannic Majesty's Indian Muslim subjects are assembled in conference for the betterment of their condition, and for counsel and consultation together on the affairs of their country. Happy is the man who has secured this privilege and is placed by the suffrage of his people in such a proud position. I feel the honour the more deeply, as it has come to me unsolicited. I am not presumptuous enough to take it merely as a personal compliment, but I take it as a tribute to the high ideals and new aspirations which are pulsating through the Islamic society of India.

Times are most unpropitious for expressing views and convictions which, in normal times of peace, there would have been no harm in frankly and unreservedly putting before our community and our Government. The present terrible conflict of nations enjoins upon as the paramount duty of saying or doing nothing which would embarrass or weaken the hands of our Government by producing undesirable excitement in the people, or lead to any impression upon foreign nations that were in any way inimical or even indifferent to the best interests of the Empire. But I see no harm in reiterating our old demands and trying to put our own house in order. I am addressing you under a deep and heavy sense of responsibility, and with your help and co-operation, in the performance of my difficult and delicate task, which I am sure will not be denied to me at this supreme moment, I hope to bring the deliberations of this meeting to a successful conclusion. Nor am I unmindful of my own unfitness for the great task you have entrusted to me. I am no orator and am not accustomed to speak in a style full of sonorous phrases and rounded periods, and I can only speak to you as a man of ordinary intelligence, who has given some thought to the questions of the day. It was when the invitation of our Secretary, my dear and esteemed friend Mr. Wazir Hasan, reached me that the difficulty of my position and the delicacy of my task flashed into my mind; but I could refuse such a request only at the risk of being charged with deserting my people at a critical juncture; so I decided to come here at your urgent call, and you must take me with all my limitations as you find me.

TRIBUTE TO THE DEAD

My next duty is to refer to some of the grievous losses that India has suffered during the past year. I am not going to make any distinction between Muslims and Hindus—Indians and Europeans. All those who have worked for the improvement of India are entitled to our grateful and affectionate remembrance.

To begin with our own community, the loss sustained by us in the death of that philosopher-poet and historian, Shams-ul-Ulema Maulana Altaf Hosain Hali, is irreparable. His great poetical work, the *Musaddas*, electrified Muslim India. It opened our eyes, roused our sleeping energies and infused into the minds of our countrymen a life, the effect of which we see before our eyes to-day. Indeed, the mission of the Great Sir Syed himself would have

remained half-unfinished, had it not been for the revivifying and rejuvenating character of the works of Hali. Sir Syed himself used to say that if God asked him on the Judgement Day what work he had done in this world, he would produce a copy of *Musaddas* and reply that he had induced Hali to write that immortal work. So high was the value placed upon Hali by perhaps the greatest judge of Muslim worth and character in modern times.

Then we have lost in Shams-ul-Ulema Maulana Shibli Nomani a research-scholar of subtle intellect and unrivalled erudition, an ardent patriot and a nationalist to the very back-bone, ever untiring in rousing the Muslim community from its deep slumber of ages.

In Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami, we have lost one of the dearest and most lovable personalities that could be imagined. He was a sincere and bold advocate of our cause, and the last few years of his life he devoted to the practical solution of many knotty problems of Islamic education and made Aligarh his home and centre of many sided activities.

The Hon'ble Khwajah Ghulamus-Saklain was the finished product of our Aligarh College, that seat of Muslim Learning in India, and we have lost him in the very flush of youth and the hey-day of his life. It is sad to contemplate that a career so full of promise should be cut short so soon. He was a bold social reformer, a tenacious and determined worker, a ripe and laborious scholar, a man who showed his profession in his practice, one who dared to live the life he preached.

Outside the pale of Islam, India mourns the loss of two of her greatest sons, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, both from this Presidency of Bombay. The time is not yet come to judge of the noble services performed by them in the cause of their mother-land, nor yet is it the time fully to appreciate the magnitude of the loss sustained by the entire country. They were giants of their generation. Their life-long and selfless services to India will remain as principal land-marks in the reformation of India. They stand as a class by themselves. The whole history of India's reawakening is bound up with their lives. It is with awe and reverence that I refer to these towering personalities, and with a last respectful and silent bow I step aside, with full heart and the deepest sorrow.

Let us not forget the love and devotion of an Englishman to the cause of India. Sir Henry Cotton was an Anglo-Indian belonging to the Civil Service; but he ever fought and worked and suffered for us. Till his dying day his thought was with India. He was not of us; yet he was ours.

Gentlemen, I have referred to these sad deaths in some detail and my object in doing so has been to remind you of the sacrifices that these sons of India underwent in the cause of their native land, and to beg of you and of the whole country to bear in mind the character of their work and to draw inspiration from their great lives, so that our own may follow the lines they

have marked out for us. If we follow the lines they have marked out for us, if we follow their examples, we may be sure our endeavours will blossom into the choicest fruit.

ANNUAL SESSION—ITS IMPERATIVE NEED

Brethren, before I enter upon what I consider as the constructive part of my address, let me dissipate some apprehensions which have been exercising the minds of some people regarding our Sessions this year. In the first place there has been a minority amongst us whilst there have been others who have been against holding it in Bombay. This minority contains leaders whose views and opinions are entitled to respectful hearing from us because of their position, influence, ability and past services. Those holding the opinion that the sessions of the League ought not to have been held at all did on the grounds; first, that a world-wide war is raging; and, secondly that Turkey, an Islamic country, is ranged against the British Empire; hence any expression of views regarding the war or the general condition of India would inevitably lead to the embarrassment of the Government in its attempts to prosecute the war successfully. To my mind this view is based upon nervousness, which entirely mis-appreciates the present situation. I believe we all fully realise the seriousness of this situation and are united in our firm determination not to add one iota to the present difficulties or anxietiesand, also, in our sincere effort to help our Government both materially and morally, in every possible way. Nor, do I believe that the Muslims of India have so far taken leave of their senses, and are so little capable of exercising control and prudence or are so willing and ready to jeopardize the best interests of their country, for the mere satisfaction of hearing their own voices and uttering wild and irresponsible words. Such a belief in any one would be highly unjust to the great community to which we have the honour to belong. Have the Muslims alone, of all the other communities inhabiting this ancient land of Hindustan, the monopoly of wild talk and foolish ideas ? When I see that the sister communities are holding their congresses and conferences in this great city, I ask myself : Are the Muslims alone to shut their mouths, sit with folded hands and keep themselves aloof from all activities ? I fail to see any sound and valid reason for their silence at this time. If the prophets are to be believed, the war is going to end next spring, a new India is to arise under new conditions and her problems are to be solved by the adoption of a new angle of vision. Are we alone to take no share in this reconstruction of our country ? Are we alone to be left behind in this race for a nobler, larger and higher life ? Are we alone to remain torpid and lifeless ? I refuse to contemplate such an object and degraded life for the followers of Islam in India. This is shutting life for the follower of Islam in India. This is shutting one's eyes deliberately to the signs of the times. This is preferring suicide to an existence of activity full of promise, an inglorious death to a glorious life. Further, our silence in these times would have been

liable to ugly and mischievous interpretation. It would have been said that, of all the communities inhabiting India, it was the Muslims alone who did not raise their voice on behalf of the Empire and refused to stand by its side in the hour of its need and anxiety. Our past would have been entirely forgotten and our present silence would have been flung into our face. I am glad to believe that in deciding to hold the Sessions of the League by an overwhelming majority you have acted with prudence and foresight. Remember this world is a world of struggle and struggle for existence is an immutable law of nature. Those who avoid it are doomed to destruction and final extinction. There is no such thing as standing still in this world. Either we must move forward or must go backward. Upon our right choice depends our very existence. What we must do is to go on in the right direction, otherwise we are never likely to reach the goal. If, because of our ignorance of the right path, or want of proper guidance or for any other cause, we are tempted to take the wrong direction, we shall be forced with two alternatives; either we shall have to retrace our steps if we can, traverse the same ground over again and lose much valuable times, or we shall be doomed to destruction. These are truisms, but truisms well worth remembering especially at this juncture. Obstacles we shall find in plenty on our way; perhaps they will at first appear to be insurmountable; but wisdom tenacity of purpose, strength of will and self-sacrifice will surmount them all.

EXPLODED VIEWS

The other class of critics who do not approve of our holding the meeting in Bombay is, I understand, neither so influential nor so numerous as the first class. They belong to, and are the remnants of the old school who had made a bogey of the Congress. They think it dangerous that the Hindus and Mahommedans should come together and unite for the progress of India and, therefore, they want to keep them as far apart as possible. These views have long since been exploded, and I do not think it worth while to refute them at this late hour of the day. Now every thinking man fully realizes and is thoroughly convinced that, unless the whole country unites and strenuously works for the advancement of the mother-land no isolated effort can gather that momentum which is requisite for our regeneration. However, I was glad to learn that the unfortunate controversy that arose over these matters was settled.

COMMUNAL INDIVIDUALITY

Gentlemen, there is another misapprehension which is making some people unnecessarily anxious and which I think should be removed. It is said that our object in holding the League contemporaneously with the Congress in the same city is to deal a blow at the independence of the League and to merge its individuality in that of the Congress. Nothing could be further from the truth. Communities like individuals love and cherish their

individuality. Every race and creed has its own particular features and characteristics developed in its own especial way, which in my opinion are the chief source of its strength. It is when all combine and bring their individual characteristics into the common stock that they contribute their quota towards the formation of a strong and united nation. The Bengalees have their own grand characteristics, so have the Sikhs, Marhattas and Parsis. Hindus of Madras have some lively traits of character. So have we, the Muslims of India. In my opinion we are distinguished from others by a peculiar varility of character derived from our brilliant historical traditions, and a solidarity which binds the highest to the lowest with a common and indissoluble tie, easily attributable to the principles of our religion. Differentiation is at the botton of evolutionary progress. When unity is evolved out of diversity, then there is real and abiding national progress. Muslims as well as Hindus have to solve their own particular problems. The Haj question is peculiar to the Muslims and effects them most nearly, whilst the problem of caste does not press us so closely as it does our Hindu brethren. Well, it may be objected that these are religious and social questions and have nothing to do with politics and the propaganda of the League. True, but these are, after all, questions which have to be solved separately by the different communities in their own ways and according to their own feelings and requirements. As a matter of fact, and speaking personally, I go further and think that even in such questions there are factors involved such as the economic and sociological, which interact, however remotely, upon all communities and thus affect the Indian people as a whole. Under such conditions who would assert that there is no necessity for the separate maintenance of such an institution as the All-India Muslim League, able to present an authoritative exposition of Muslim views on all questions affecting our community ? What is most objectionable is that there should be an unyielding antagonism between the principal communities of this country such as to retard its common progress, and that, instead of an honest attempt to understand each other's views, there should be an unreasoning hostility which has produced nothing but irreparable injury to our cause. It is quite time for different communities fully to realize that they are like so many limbs to the body-politic, and any attempt by one to aggrandise itself at the expense of the other must result in injury to the whole body. But these reflections in the present happy state of feelings have become out of date and need not be referred to in any details. All communities are now united in sinking their so-called differences for the common good and that this state of feeling may continue long and develop to its uttermost limits, must be the prayer of every lover of India.

ISLAM IN INDIA

Gentlemen, before I proceed further I should like the Muslims of India to realize their true position in the country. It is then and then alone that

they can understand their rights, duties and responsibilities. Races, classes and creeds without number inhabit this ancient land. In this wonderful medley of people where do we come in ? Have we any real place or not ? Some people are influenced by ideas engendered by the teachings of history, often I fear, not very authentic or reliable history. The fact is that most historians, when dealing with nationalities and peoples other than their own, are obsessed either by political bias or religious prejudices. One hardly ever comes across any modern history which is free from such defects. If we desire to know the truth we must go back to our own histories and read them in the light of modern methods.

The first advent of the Muslims in India was along these very coasts in the form of a naval expedition sent by the Third Khalifa in the year 636 A.D. This was more than four hundred years before William, the Conqueror defeated the Saxons at the battle of Hastings. After many vicissitudes, into the details of which it is unnecessary to go, the Muslim Empire was firmly established in India. These invaders made India their home and did not consider it a land of regrets. They lived amongst the people of the country, mixed with them freely and became true citizens of India. As a matter of fact they had no other home but India From time to time their number was strengthened by fresh blood from Arabia, Persia and other Muslim lands, but their ranks were swollen mainly by additions from the people of the country themselves. It is most interesting to know that out of the present seventy millions of the Muslim population those who have claimed their descent from remote non-Indian ancestors, amount only to eight millions Whence have the remaining millions come, if not from India ranks? The Muslims enriched the hoary civilization of India with their own literature and art, evolved and developed by their creative and versatile genius. From the Himalayas to Cape Comorin the entire country is studded with those gems of art which remained one of the glorious periods of Muslim rule. The result was a new civilization which was the outcome of the combined efforts of all the peoples of India and the product of the two greatest civilizations in the history of the world. During Muslim times all offices were equally open to all, without any distinction of class, creed or colour. The only conditions were fitness and efficiency. So we have the spectacle of a Hindu Prime minister, a Hindu governor of Kabul. Ethnology and folklore of India speak eloquently of manners and customs showing the influence of one people upon the other. The only link which the Muslims kept with the countries outside India was the spiritual link of their religion. This was under the circumstances inevitable. Islam enjoins a brother-hood which in my humble opinion is much wider and more catholic than the modern European notions of nationality. It embraces peoples of different races, colours and countries within its fold, whilst it does not exclude the binding forces of nationality. Arabian History is full of instances when Mussulmans and Christians fought side by side to defend their country from the attacks of foreign foes. These are the facts of

History written in large letters, and those who run may read them. This short historical retrospect may be succinctly expressed in two words which fully and clearly describe the elements and conditions of our existence in India. We are Indian Muslims. These words, 'Indian Muslims', convey the ideas of our nationality and of our religion and as long as we keep our duties and responsibilities arising from these factors before our eyes, we can hardly go wrong.

THE DUTIES OF INDIAN MUSLIMS

Now let us find out the duties that our nationality and religion require of us. Everyone of this assembly, and for all I know every-one outside it, will agree with me that our first and foremost duty is to our God, the King of Kings and the Ruler of the destinies of all countries and nations. We, Muslims, who believe in the Divine message—the Holy Quran—and the great Prophet of Arabia can reply to the Divine interrogatory in one way and one only. The Quran is all-embracing in 'its character and scope, and has not left out the important questions of a Muslim's duties to his earthly sovereign and his non-Muslim neighbours. Our loyalty and patriotism are sustained by the motive-power of our faith and in my estimation a bad Muslim could never be a good subject or a good citizen.

DUTY TO GOVERNMENT

Next to God, we owe duties to our sovereign, our country and our community. Our duty to our sovereign is plain and clear. Our loyalty as subjects of our King-Emperor is unquestioning and unquestioned. We have proved it fully in the past, and, if occasion arises, and if we are given the chance, we are prepared to provide it again. In these days of anxiety the entire community has given its support to the utmost limit of its power and is willing to give every help to and co-operate with the State in its gigantic task by every available means. No deed, action or speech of ours has ever hampered or is likely to hamper the Government in its obvious duty of maintaining the prestige and power of the great Empire to which we are privileged to belong. Nor have we ever failed in giving our best support to the Government of India in its legitimate function of carrying on the administration of the country. Of course this does not mean abstinence on our part from all criticisms of Government measures where we feel convinced that they militate against the best interests of the country or the Empire; but all such criticisms must be honest, sincere and dignified, and never couched in intemperate language or offered in a carping spirit or tinged with malice. Ideas are in the air which have no relation with the actualities of Indian conditions and, if persisted in, can bring nothing but misery and disappointment. The fact should be clearly realized that Providence has joined the destiny of India with that of England and there is no fighting against Providence. For better or worse we have to live and work together. If I thought our destiny called for

a complete separation and that it would be for the good of my country, I would not hesitate in saying so, though the penal and repressive laws might crush me afterwards. But I have no doubt in my mind and have no scruple in saying that this union is for the good of India and England, and we cannot do without the comradeship and guidance of England for a long time to come. We have derived numerous benefits and certainly more are to come in the fulness of time. But even if Indians wished it, they could not drive England out of India, nor could Englishmen, if they so desired it, leave India. If England left India tomorrow, what would be our fate? Any nation with a small Army could take possession of the country, and we should have to begin over again the work of one hundred and fifty years. This is on the assumption that the new-comer would treat us exactly in the same manner as England has treated us up to this time. Would this be an advantage? Decidedly and emphatically, no ? Self-interest is the foundation upon which the intentions and actions of nations are based; and we are no exceptions to the rule. We must realize the annual facts and make no mistake about them.

DUTY TO THE SISTER COMMUNITIES

About what we owe to our non-Muslim fellow subjects I have never concealed my opinion before and I can only repeat here what I have often said. I am one of those who have never taken a narrow and sectarian view of Indian politics. When a question concerning the welfare of India and of justice to Indians arises I am not only an Indian first, but an Indian next and an Indian to the last, an Indian and an Indian alone favouring no community and no individual, but on the side of those who desire the advancement of India as a whole without prejudice to the rights and interests of any individual, much less of any community, whether my own or another. But whenever any question arose on which there was a clear and unmistakable Divine injunction conveyed to me by my God through my Prophet, I could not even consider, let alone accept as correct, anything conflicting with that injunction, no matter on what mundane authority it was based. With Divine authority as my only guide I will be not only a Muslim first, but a Muslim next, a Muslim to the last and a Muslim and nothing but a Muslim. People may scoff and laugh, but I hold firmly to these convictions. In the affairs of my country I stand for goodwill and close co-operation between all communities, with a single eye to the progress of the mother-land. If we look sufficiently deeply into the different questions affecting India we should find hardly any which does not affect all equally. Are we less heavily taxed than are our Hindu or Parsi brethren ? Do the repressive measures passed during recent times weigh less heavily upon the Mussulmans than upon the Sikhs or the Marhattas ? Are the newspapers of Muslims more free than those of the Hindus? Does the administration of justice produce different effect upon the different communities of India ? Are the rigours and invidious distinctions of the Arms Act reserved only for the martial races, and are the non-martial free from them? No. The

truth is that in essential matters such as legislation, taxation, administration of justice, education, we are all in the same boat, and we must sink or swim together. No doubt there are occasions when differences arise which lead to heated discussions, and in the excitement of the moment hard words are said on both sides which are regretted afterwards. Take, for instance the question of special electorates. We all remember the bitterness of feeling produced by the controversy, and I am afraid, this still rankles. You all know my views on the question, views which, I am afraid, have not found favour with the vast majority of my community, but, in my humble opinion, and I say it with due deference to the opinion of others, there is no reason why such questions should not be solved by the trusted leaders of all communities at a round table conference, discussing matters in a friendly spirit. There are a few other questions of temporary interest, which do not in any way affect the essentials of our corporate life as citizens of a common land and could be easily solved by a little sobriety of judgment, based upon the principle of give-and-take.

DUTY TO OURSELVES

As to the duties that we owe to ourselves the first place I give to self-reliance. For too long have we relied upon others. It is quite time that we got rid of unreliable and temporary props, stood upon our own legs and became a self-reliant people. For too long has our policy been regulated by distrust and dominated by fear. We have unnecessarily feared and distrusted the Hindus. We have had an unholy awe of authority and we have never placed any faith in ourselves but have made ourselves dependent on others. All this must be changed. This policy has kept us from enjoying our rightful share in the public life of our country to the great detriment of our best interests. We must have independence and open our eyes in the fresh air.

Then, I am afraid, I see dissension even within our own community. This must be fought with all our strength and by all fair means within our grasp. The tendency to disunion ultimately ends in disruption. These are times when new forces are coming into play and new ideals are convulsing Muslim society, ideals which have to be carefully nursed and fostered and must not be frittered away in senseless dissensions. True organisation is the secret of the strength of a society, and we must be so organized that our voice will command and compel respect, the country and the Government recognize in it the well-condsidered and unanimous opinion of the entire community which it would not be easy to ignore. We cannot go on dissipating our strength in fruitless and harmful attempts at compromises that only hamper us in our onward progress. Our League has done most useful work. It is a progressive body and is ready to adapt itself to the necessities of the times; but unfortunately that sense of discipline which would place the considered opinion of the majority over that of the minority, is sometimes lacking. I do not advocate that anyone should give up his independent views; but bickerings should cease and submission to the opinion of the

majority must be insisted upon. A little self-control and sense of proportion is all that is wanted. We have numerous other duties to perform, but the time and space at my disposal are limited and you must excuse me if I do not deal with them.

WHAT OTHERS OWE US

Gentlemen, I have dealt with the duties of the Muslims of India in their different phases; but we have corresponding rights which entail certain duties upon others. We expect from our non-Muslim fellow countrymen the same consideration and co-operation which we are offering to them. It takes two to make a compact. A onesided compact is no compact and can never be lasting. If we all bore this principle in mind, there could never be any serious difficulty.

DUTIES OF GOVERNMENT

Brethren, just as we owe duties to Government, similarly the Government owes duties to us. It would be ungrateful on our part not to acknowledge the innumerable advantages that India has derived from her contact with England. England has given to India the inestimable blessing of peace. She has maintained order amongst us. She is protecting us from external invasion and internal anarchy. She has given us a settled Government. She has brought the inventions of Science to our very doors. Lastly, she has freed the intellect of India from its cramped prison, wherein it was able to rise no higher than a blind adherence to rather out-of-date authorities. To my mind this is the greatest blessing that British rule has brought in its wake. After all, brain rules the world, and when once it has become free and begun to perform its proper functions, without let or hindrance, progress is bound to follow as a natural consequence. England brought with her rule her noble literature, with its fine teachings of freedom and liberty. That is a real gift to India, and she can never sufficiently repay it. I freely confess all these and am sincerely grateful for them. But much more yet remains to be accomplished, and, from the Indian point of view, the things that really matter in the life of a nation. England has borne the burden of India, but has not prepared her to bear her own burdens. She has not made her strong, self-reliant and self-supporting. She has not made her a nation respected by the other nations of the world. She has not developed the resources of the country, as it was her duty to develop them. She has not helped the Indian people to live a life of the greatest possible fullness. She has failed to bring out the capacities of the people of Hindustan to their fullest extent. England's connection with India has lasted for about a century and a half and most parts of the country have been under her direct rule during this period. But the progress India has made with all her vast resources, material, moral and economic, is comparatively very small. Compare her with other countries. Compare her with Japan. Within 40 years Japan, from being one of the weakest and most

backward countries of the world, has advanced to the position of one of the foremost and the most highly developed nations and is counted among the great Powers. But in the case of India, the government of the country has been conducted on lines which were not conducive to any better results. The children of the soil have no real share in the Government of their own country. Policy is laid down and carried on by non-Indians which oftener than not goes against the wishes of the people and ignores their sentiments. Remember, I do not attribute motives. I believe the administration of the country has been carried on by conscientious, hard-working men, who have honestly done their work according to their best lights, but their work has degenerated into a mere routine. People who have spent their lives in carrying out details can hardly ever rise above their surroundings and view things from a broader outlook.

PRINCIPLES AND PERFORMANCE

Policies and principles of a nobler kind may be laid down by higher authorities, but their value is determined by those who have to carry them out. Thus it has often been the case in India that noble intentions have degenerated into pious wishes and even into harmful actions. If the Indian people were real partners in the actual governance of the country, the Indian point of view would have prevailed, much that is now admitted to have been mistaken would have been avoided, the country would have progressed and the ruling classes would have been spared the bitter and, sometimes undeserved criticisms hurled against them. Unless and until India has got a national Government and is governed for the greatest good of the Indian people, I do not see how she can be contented. India does not demand 'a place in the sun' in any aggressive sense, but she does require the light of the Indian sun for her own children.

INDIANS AND THE PUBLIC SERVICES

Gentlemen, let us descend a little from generalities into details and see how the policy of the past has worked not only to our detriment but to the positive weakening of the British rule itself. Let us see what small share we have in the larger life of the Empire. I have already said that we have no share in laying down the policy upon which India is ruled. Have we any share even in the different Services of the country ? Are we allowed to serve our own land and the Empire to the best of our capacity and ability? In every country the three premier Services considered to be the Military, the Naval and the Diplomatic.

THE MILITARY SERVICE

Let us begin with the Military : In spite of the numerous martial races who inhabit India in millions, no Indian can rise above the non-Commissioned ranks. We cannot hope to gain a higher position than that of a Subedar-Major or a Risaldar-Major. Every position that would give them an indepen-

dent command is closed to them. The regular army is limited in number, no volunteers are taken from our ranks and the general population is rigorously disarmed. The Arms Act perpetuates invidious distinctions on ground of colour and creed-distinctions most humiliating to the people of the country. Going about their ordinary daily occupations our people may be attacked by dacoits and evilly-disposed persons or even by wild beasts, but they cannot defend themselves. Even lathis have been held by some judicial authorities to be dangerous weapons. Newspapers and official communiques tell us that ordinary Naiks of our Indian Army have on the battle field conducted themselves most bravely and have led their companies with conspicuous gallantry and ability at times when all the English officers were either killed or disabled. If our men are capable of such initiative and valiant deeds on the actual field of battle, why, Indians naturally ask, should they not be trusted in the piping times of peace ? Had they been only trained and allowed to serve, millions and millions would have sprung up by the side of England at her slightest call in this, the hour of her need. Indeed, no other nation of the world has such an inexhaustible source of strength as Great Britain has in the teeming masses of India, but India has been so maimed and crippled in her manhood that she can help neither herself nor Great Britain. The idea is galling and humiliating that, if a time came when India was in danger, her own sons would not be able to save their hearths and homes, the honour and lives of their wives and children but would have to look to foreign nations like Japan and Russia for help and succour. Peace and order are the first requisites of a settled Government and without them there would be mere chaos; but unlimited and long continued peace has a tendency to enervate and emasculate people. To make a living nation higher qualities are required. A spirit which will not bow before any adverse wind, an internal strength which will brave every threatened danger, a capacity which will bear all toils and troubles, a determination which will flinch from no task, however impossible it may appear, a discipline which will love and be happy in the service of the country and the Empire, are qualities necessary for the attainment of that life which I call a full life. These moral forces can only come into play when people are free and unrestricted in the exercise of all their facilities. The profession of arms is perhaps one which breeds this spirit and brings out these potential forces more than any other. To close it to any portion of humanity is to turn them into lifeless machines.

THE NAVAL SERVICE

In the Navy, we cannot rise above the rank of a Laskar. Attempts are often made to keep us out even of this lowly position. India has a vast seaboard, peopled by sea-faring nations. To refuse them their birth-right is to waste so much good material which would have gone to increase the strength of the Empire. Why not have a few Indian dread-naughts and cruisers manned by Indians and commanded by their own countrymen ? It is said

that the Indians are not fit for the Navy. Having not trained and tried them, it is not fair or just to say so. Try them first, and, if found wanting, then you have a right to reject them As yet, Indians have never failed in offices of trust and responsibility where they have been tried. Open up new fields for them, put them in fresh positions and trust them, and I am sure that they will never be found wanting. The history of ancient India proves that naval capacity is there; but it lies dormant for want of sufficient opportunity.

THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

Now I pass on to the Diplomatic Service. Here we are conspicuous by our entire absence from it. What prevents the Government from utilising the intellect, the ability and the energy of our people in this direction, I fail to understand. Why should not some of the numerous posts of Political Residents and Agents of India be opened to them ? Indians if trained are, in my opinion, and must from the very fact that they are Indians, be in a better position than Englishmen to perform those duties which appertain to Indian diplomacy. Their intimate knowledge of the conditions of India and of the feelings and sentiments of the people must place them in a better position than the members of the Civil Service in negotiating those difficult and delicate matters which fall to the lot of diplomats. They must be in a better position to understand the different shades of views and opinions obtaining in the Native States and avoid giving any cause for unnecessary irritation and suspicion. The paths of diplomacy would be smoothed; and the difficulties which arise from ignorance of customs, manners and ways of thought would be avoided. Further afield, I see no reason why picked Indians should not be accredited to the courts of countries outside India, as ambassadors and plenipotentiaries and why the post of consuls should be reserved for Europeans only. It is merely an unwillingness to allow Indians to share in the burden of the Empire, prompted by mistrust and suspicion. And here, too, I am afraid, the great strength inherent in Islam which counts nearly one hundred millions of followers amongst His Majesty's subjects has been thrown away and not utilised in the political interest of the Empire. As a matter of fact, this strength has never been realized or has received that attention which it deserved from the politicians and statesmen of Europe.

Gentlemen, believe me that, when I speak about these services I have not in my mind the salaries and emoluments which such posts carry with them. To me this is as nothing compared with the fact of our participation in the larger life of the Empire. My stand point is that every possible source of strength should be organized and every particle of it should be brought into play in the service of our mother-land and the Empire.

THE CIVIL SERVICE

In India, the Civil Service is considered to be the premier public service of the country. Here, too, we are circumscribed and hedged in by rules and

regulations which makes it for our people if not altogether impossible, at least very difficult to enter. The examination which is the only possible way of entry for an Indian is held in London, 7,000 miles away from his home. Those educated youths who cannot bear the cost and expenses of such a journey, are entirely debarred from it, however brilliant they may be. The fortunate few, who can afford to compete with Englishmen, have to do so in a language absolutely foreign to them. Why should the examination not be held both in England and India to give the youths of both countries equal chances is an anomaly which passes my comprehension. For a number of years the country has been loudly demanding this much-delayed justice, but instead we get the recent Indian Civil Service Act which has entirely abolished the competitive system. No doubt the operation of the Act is temporary, but a wrong precedent has been created, and no one knows to what further developments it will lead.

In the minor services of the country, such as Police, Forest Education, the higher places have been reserved for Europeans and the children of the soil have been told that the doors have been shut against them. One would have expected that at least in these minor places Indians would not have failed, but all our protest and entreaties have been of no avail so far.

POVERTY OF THE MASSES

Gentlemen, I pass on now to the economical development of the country. Let us see what progress we have made in this direction. Admittedly India is an agricultural country and its real life and strength is in the teeming millions of humanity who live in the villages, principally by agriculture. Has anything really been done to raise them from their poverty-ridden and helpless conditions? In spite of the jugglery of figures in which the hearts of statisticians delight, what is the state of the country and its peasantry? Statistics are supposed to prove every theory advanced by men anxious to prove their case, but our eyes are our best witnesses and cannot deceive us. India is a country rich in natural resources—resources which are not inferior to any other country in this wide, wide world. Her land bears every variety of crops from cotton and jute to wheat and mustard. Her mines produce every kind of metal from gold and iron ores down to the best coal and not excluding numerous precious stones. She has a climate ranging from the bitterest cold to the intensest heat. Her rivers and forests are full of life and materials useful to man. In short, India is a self-contained, miniature world. In such a country what is the state of things of her inhabitants? All that manual labour can do is done, but because of the want of scientific methods and other causes beyond their control, the profits which ought to have been theirs are lost to them. Side by side with green, minutely and industriously cultivated fields, we find tiny and dilapidated mud hovels thatched with old and rotten straw. In these hovels there are neither windows nor floor-cloths, and the only furniture that they boast of are a few earthen vessels and perhaps a chatai. Human beings and

cattle herd together with no arrangements for sanitation. Such are the conditions in which the great majority of our people pass their miserable existence.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

In commerce and industry we are no better off. Our old indigenous industries have been killed by foreign competition, and new attempts are crippled in the interests of other peoples than those of India. The instance of the cotton excise duties is before us—duties which have been imposed in the interests of Manchester and Lancashire. Before the war we were in the tentacles of the Teuton octopus, now we are in those of America and Japan. The Indian Government with its vast and costly organization, has not been able to help India, but has allowed foreign countries to capture her trade and commerce and dump down their heavily subsidised goods in our markets. This was the psychological moment for helping our industries and commerce, but precious opportunities have been allowed to slip away from our hands.

EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE

Gentlemen, these are instances of questions from which we were rigidly excluded and upon which we were not allowed to have our say. Now, I come to some of those questions where we raised our voice in protest, when measures affecting our well-being were carried into effect in the teeth of our severe opposition. Foremost of these was the question of Education. Even here vain attempts are being made to cramp and confine the intellect. It is considered that the ideas of freedom and liberty derived from the literature of England have produced disquieting symptoms in the educated youths of the country, and English trade in books and newspapers is altogether stopped and the entire Indian Press is forbidden to re-print European books and their translations. In fact, they have to go further and ban all Oriental books of any liberal tendency and I am afraid, most of them are saturated with such tendencies. Indeed I do not understand how we can manage it, unless we transform India to use Lord Morley's phrase, into an ignorant, illiterate and gagged India, obliterate its ancient civilization, wipe out the good work done by England and make it of no use either to itself or to others. It is in the nature of education to rouse self-consciousness, and when people begin to compare their own conditions with those obtaining in other countries and discover their own backwardness, they naturally begin to try to better their condition. Education breeds a sense of patriotism and love for country, which are now-a-days called by some people by a different and an opprobrious name. Instead of finding out the true causes of evils, a hasty and ill-considered remedy is applied which inevitably fails as it is bound to fail. When Indian leaders saw the horrible state of illiteracy prevailing in India and the evil effects of it on the masses, they proposed the remedy of free and compulsory education. That great man, the late Mr. Gokhale brought in a Bill, which in details was the most moderate measure, but the Government refused to accept

it. and to this day the Anglo-Indian Press misses no opportunity of misrepresenting its provisions. If the Bill had been accepted, India would have become literate not immediately and not at once, but in 40 years, and the people themselves would have borne the expenditure. The measure was so moderate that it was to be introduced in those localities only, where a majority of the people consented to its introduction. One would have thought that the Government would have embraced this opportunity of doing a good turn to the people and gaining their affection and gratitude, but curious ideas prevailed and the Bill was rejected to the regret of the entire country.

REPRESSIVE LEGISLATION

I now pass on to two of the recent repressive measures, the Press Act and the Defence of India Act. These Acts have worked harshly and told heavily upon the persons and properties of some leaders of our community. Mussulmans are intensely agitated, and I should be grossly negligent in the discharge of my duties as the spokesman of Muslim India if I failed to give voice to their feelings on the subject. On principle and by sentiment I object to repression and coercion, be it from the Government or from any section of a disaffected people. Fear is the motive force in both cases. From the first dawn of human polity there have been two methods of dealing with people. You can rule them through fear or rule them through love. It cannot be denied that coercion and terrorism whether that of rulers or of rebels, do occasionally succeed. But its success is temporary ; the reaction is terrible and follows swiftly. These short cuts to a solution of political difficulties, whether they be undertaken by the rulers or by their disaffected subjects only end in disaster. Terrorism is a *cul de sac* leading nowhere, and sooner or later the terrorist must retrace his footsteps. The only lasting bond is that of love. The road is long, but never wearisome. This is a time of great crisis in the life of the British Empire, and, therefore, there is all the more reason to subject the people of India to the compelling force of love and not to the fleeting force of fear. Repression generally defeats its own purpose. To the terrorists among our own people I can say with confidence that they can never hope to terrorise a powerful nation like the British. To the coercionist among our rulers I can say with equal confidence that they can never hope to repress, the rising hopes and aspirations of 315 millions of people. The policy of repression is an insult to God, who surely could not have created one-fifth of humanity in His own image and yet made dumb driven cattle of them all. But it is no less an insult to the countrymen of Shakespeare and Milton to think that repression could ultimately and finally succeed in cowing down those whose only crime was that they fearlessly spoke the tongue that Shakespeare spoke and held the faith and morals that Milton held.

VICTIMS OF THE PRESS ACT

I remember well, how and under what conditions the Press Act was passed.

The members of the Imperial Council have their consent to the passing of the Bill on the express understanding that the law was intended for the anarchists and would never be applied in the case of peaceful citizens anxious to enlighten Government officers as to the sentiments and feelings of the people. But what is the result? All the independent Muslim papers have either been wiped out or are dragging on a lifeless and miserable existence. *The Comrade* is gone, *The Hamdard* has been strangled to death, *The Muslim Gazette* ceased to exist long ago, *Al-Hilal* is no more, *The Zemindar* is carrying on its colourless existence with a sword of Damocles always hanging over its head. Who ever thought that the Press Act would be applied in this fashion? Is it possible for the people not to resent such treatment and are their feeling to be treated so lightly? Feelings and sentiments are not made to order, but they easily respond to kindness and sympathy.

INTERNMENT OF MOSLEM LEADERS

Under the Defence of India Act, Muslim Leaders like Mohammad Ali, Zafar Ali and Shaukat Ali and some other Muslims have been deprived of their liberty and interned. Please do not misunderstand me. It is my honest conviction that no Government in the world could, without betraying its trust, dispense with such protective legislation in the difficult times we are now passing through as might prove necessary. Every Government is bound to protect itself and the people over whom it rules by laws which save them from external and internal trouble. What I object to is the manner in which these laws have been worked to the injury of Muslim leaders of great influence and popularity. No reasons have been given for their internment and people are left to indulge in their own guesses and surmises. In my opinion the right procedure would have been to take the people into confidence, give them full, frank and straight-forward reasons for these extraordinary internments and then have left the whole matter to the sanity of their judgment. Provided the reasons were sufficient and justifiable, I cannot conceive of the possibility of the vast majority of Muslims objecting to the Government action in spite of the great services of these gentlemen to the cause of Islam and India. But an opposite course, that of secrecy, resulting in irritation and excitement was adopted. Mussulmans feel that their leaders have been the victims of that unholy spy system which has wrought so much mischief and created bad blood in the country. At this juncture I can with justice say that no Indian community has had its loyalty put to a greater test during this war than the Muslims, and we have every cause to complain that Muslim loyalty has not been appreciated by the powers that be. Mussulmans have given ample expression to their desire to remain peaceful and law-abiding members of British Empire and in deference to non-Muslim and official susceptibilities have left much unsaid to which they might with justice have given free expression. This self-restraint and self-abnegation deserved better treatment. The best way to create trust is to trust others, for mistrust begets nothing but

mistrust. Knowing the feeling of the community on this point, as I do, I think it is to their great credit that so little has been heard of public demonstrations. Their sense of responsibility prevented them from venting their feelings in public. Government should not remain under the false impression that the Mussulmans of India approve of its action. No, they do not ; and if there be a real desire to soothe their ruffled feelings, it is high time that these leaders were restored to freedom at an early date.

Mr. Mohammad Ali, with that great and venerable leader, Nawab Vikar-ul-Mulk, now to our deep sorrow lying on a bed of sickness, was one of the principal founders of our League, and both are greatly missed in our Sessions today.

PROTECTION OF RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

Another urgent demand of the country has been shelved, on the ground that it is of a controversial nature- I mean the measure for the safety of religious buildings. Our leader, the Hon'ble the Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad, has told us that his attempts in this direction have not succeeded. Really my mind fails to grasp who are the people who contest the measure and on what grounds ? Surely no opposition can possibly come from the Indians themselves. They are all united. Does it come from the officials ? Our Indian religions have been protected by Parliamentary Statutes and Royal Pledges, and no interference can be tolerated by any authority in matters religious. It is a profound pity that such golden opportunities for reconciling the people and gaining their affections are so lightly thrown away.

MEN OF BLOOD AND IRON

Gentlemen, although I have criticized the Indian administration I have also indicated the lines upon which reforms are urgently called for in the government of the country. If we are to be counted among living nations these reforms must be achieved. To be a self-respecting nation and one respected by others is the aspiration of the Indian people. But, unfortunately, opposition comes from a certain number of officials who do not believe in Indians thinking for themselves. They tell us that, as we are properly governed, we need not trouble ourselves about the other good things of this world and must not clamour for them. Unfortunately amongt them there are men who belong to the party of 'powder and shot and no damn'd non-sense'. They do not recognize that Indians have any right. To them any act of clemancy or justice tempered by mercy is what they call killing by kindness. They believe in administering the law with extreme rigour and showing no consideration for the feelings of the people. Even when a good, kind and statesman-like Viceroy like Lord Hardinge saves 14 human beings from the gallows, they raise their voice the loudest, and say that such an act of mercy must presage the downfall of the British Empire, as if the English rule were based upon such insecure supports and unstable foundations. They

do not realize that it is the personality of this great Englishman and his popularity amongst Indians, and not the repressive measures, that has largely contributed towards the solution of many vexed questions and has kept Indian peaceful and quiet. It is not possible to co-operate any little point in favour of Indians. They are too short-sighted to look into the future and safeguard the interests of the Empire. But fortunately the race of great statesmen has not become extinct in England. There are men who see far ahead and can read the future with a clearer sight. The present dreadful world cataclysm has brought about new conditions, and mighty transformations are in progress. We are on the eve of eventful changes and the East is moving towards its inevitable destiny, but no one knows what lies behind the loom of time. New ideas are springing up and questions are being looked at from new points of view. A new bond has been cemented between the two races by the blood of our people on the battle fields of Europe, Asia and Africa. India has refrained from no sacrifices which were asked of her and which it was in her power to give. She could give much more and supply the needs of England out of her own resources, if she were freely developed. And mind, India has shed her blood and undergone sacrifices, not in the hope of favours to come, but of her own free will and accord. Surely all this cannot go for nothing and must be taken into account and must influence the re-adjustment of the fabric of Empire about which we hear so much. Some say, whatever you may gain, you cannot get self-government for India. They state that our country is not prepared for self-government and the best form of rule that she can have in the present circumstances is benevolent despotism. True, but where to get the despot who would rule such a vast country with benevolence ? What we find is that instead of one benevolent despot we have a number of despots who are anything but benevolent. No, gentlemen, the only form of Government which is possible for India is that embodied in the constitution of our League and that is self-government suitable to the needs and requirements of the country under the aegis of the British Crown. Then and then alone India will be contented and a camaraderie will spring up between the two races which will cement the bonds of fellowship. Instead of a policy of mistrust and suspicion we must have a policy of trust and confidence. Let there be no misunderstanding about these essentials in the Government of the country.

RECONSTRUCTION

Gentlemen, our demands are neither immediate nor peremptory. We can wait and must wait till the end of the war, when the whole Empire will be reconstructed upon new lines ; but there is no harm in postulating our demands now and informing the British people of the unity and the intensity with which the reforms are insisted upon. When the affairs of the Empire are taken into consideration, our views should be before the English nation. Of course we cannot expect that India will change in the twinkling of an eye

by some magical process, but we do hope a new policy will be initiated which will end in self-government and give us the status and power of a living nation. The reforms must come steadily, but surely. But hope deferred maketh the heart sick, and delay deprives the reforms of all their grace. If you, ask me to give you indications of reforms which are immediately needed, I would say that the first step towards self-government must be taken by abolishing the packed official majority in the Imperial Council. We must have a sure and safe elected non-Official Majority, which would discuss and deal will all Indian questions from the Indian stand-point. The late Lord Minto was quite right when he recommended this very reform which I am placing before you now. Next, we must free the Executive Council of the Viceroy from the incubus of the Bureaucracy. Then fierce light would be thrown into the dark corners of Indian administration. We must have more Indians in the Executive Council, which is really the chief source from which policies emanate. In England, the members of the Cabinet are not drawn from the official classes, but from the non-official. Again, a great reform that is needed is what has been called 'Provincial Autonomy.' Provinces are now working within the circumscribed limits allowed by the Government of India. In domestic affairs and finance they should have the fullest liberty of action. Local Self-Government should not be a mere sham, but based on real foundations as contemplated by that noble Viceroy, the Marquis of Ripon. The Arms Act must disappear from the Statute Book and no limitation should be laid on the entry of Indians into any Public Service as I have enlisted freely from all classes. Agriculture must be improved and Commerce and Industry helped. Education will have to be free and compulsory. These are the points which come to my mind at present. I have not tried to be exhaustive, nor is it possible for me to do so. I have refrained from laying down any cut and dry scheme of self-government. I suggest that there should be unanimity on these questions amongst all the people of India and I can conceive of no better agency than that of a joint deputation of the Congress and the League which would place our demands before the British public and the British Government, Of course, before such a deputation is formed there must be a joint conference of the trusted leaders of both these organizations in which a general agreement must be come to, the interests of all safeguarded. Such an agreement should be placed before public meetings of the recognized Political Institutions of the different communities for confirmation. I have no doubt that such a representation would command a sympathetic hearing from the British nation.

A CHERISHED DESIRE OF MOSLEMS

Gentlemen, before I conclude there is one other matter which is deeply felt by our community ; and I know that it is the desire of a vast majority of Mussulmans that I should speak on it. It is a rather delicate subject, but it is better that our feelings and sentiments should be expressed frankly,

although with a proper sense of responsibility. It is a sore point with us that the Government of our Caliph should be at war with the Government of our King-Emperor. We should all have been pleased to see our brethren in faith fighting side by side with the soldiers of the British Empire. Whatever view one may take of the policy adopted by Islamic countries in the present war, Indian Moslems never desired not even can desire hostility between the British and Islamic Governments. That the hostility should have come about is the greatest misfortune that could possibly have befallen Indian Moslems. But this the fates decreed. I have no desire to enter into details, but a vast majority of my co-religionists and, for the matter of that, numerous Englishmen, too, attribute it to the past foreign policy of Great Britain and to the failure of British Diplomacy. However that may be, it is the cherished desire of the followers of Islam that when peace comes, and pray God that it will in such a way that their dignity will not be compromised in the future. There are four hundred millions of Mussulmans in the world, bound together in common brotherhood, whose feelings and sentiments should not be ignored in any settlement which may be arrived at. There is a living force and a great potential strength in this vast human brotherhood which, if properly realised, would be an immense asset.

CONCLUSION

Brethren, I have finished. I have said what I had to say without any reservation and without any *arriere pensee*. I have indicated the lines upon which our country should work and have abstained from going into details. My concluding words to you are : Have faith in your own-selves and trust in God above. With an undaunted heart and unflinching determination march forward towards that irresistible destiny which has been reserved for you in your Sacred Book—Halt not, falter not.

RESOLUTION I

The All-India Muslim League records with profound sorrow its deep sense of the loss that the Muslim community in particular and the country in general has sustained by the deaths of Nawab Sir Khawaja Salim-ullah Khan Bahadur of Dacca, Sir Adamji Peerbhoy, Maulana Khawaja Altaf Husain Hali, Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami and the Hon'ble Khawaja Ghulam-us-Saqalain and begs to convey its respectful condolence to the bereaved families.

RESOLUTION II

The All-India Muslim League records its great sense of loss at the deaths of the Hon'ble Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta, whose great and varied services in the cause of India shall ever live in the

grateful recollections of every class and creed of the Indian people. The League then adjourned till 2 p.m. on the following day.

SECOND SITTING

31 December 1915

The anxiety and fear entertained in various quarters regarding the Bombay Session of the All-India Muslim League were partly realized this afternoon when the League resumed its adjourned sitting to get through the brief programme before it, though what threatened to be a very serious disturbance was averted by the tact, coolness and great presence of mind displayed on the occasion by the President and other distinguished leaders who were in attendance. By 2 p.m., the time appointed for the meeting, almost all the members of the League were in their seats, but the portion reserved for visitors was mostly unoccupied. About half an hour before the meeting, Mr. Edwards, the Commissioner of Police, had sent a force of about 50 Policemen armed with lathies who were kept in readiness in an enclosure just in front of the pandal; while half a dozen European police officers under Superintendent Walker were patrolling the grounds. Later, however, Mr. Edwards, accompanied by his three Deputies, also arrived at the spot. The acting Chief Presidency Magistrate, Rai Bahadur C. H. Setalvad, was seen in company of the Commissioner of Police at a later stage. Inside the pandal, several C. I. D. officers, both European and Indian, had taken seats as visitors by payment of fees. When the President stepped up to the dais, he was loudly cheered, and just then the visitors' seats which had been unoccupied were filled by a large number of men who came in a body.

The business before the meeting was very brief. The first resolution expressed the loyalty of the Mussulmans and the second prayed for an extension of Lord Hardinge's Viceroyalty. The third related to the formation of a committee for drafting a scheme of reforms. The agenda also contained a resolution urging communal representation on all self-governing public bodies. This seems to have found no favour with Mr. Hasrat Mohani, who had before the commencement of the proceeding, given notice of his intention to move adjournment, for, as he said susbequently, according to the compromise arrived at in the presence of the Governor of Bombay, no other resolution, except that of loyalty and for the appointment of a committee on the question of self-government and a few on other formal matters, was to be brought forward.

The proceedings commenced with the President declaring that the first resolution of.loyalty was to be moved from the Chair. Mr. Hasrat Mohani thereupon raised a point of order, and said that his motion for adjournment must be discussed first. The president said, 'Please sit down'. The ruling of the Chair was obeyed. The President, in putting the resolution, remarked that he had said all that he had to say on this subject in his speech the day

before and asked if there was any dissent. There were cries of 'No, no'. The President thereupon declared the resolution passed. The second resolution about the extension of Lord Hardinge's Viceroyalty was also moved from the Chair, and carried by acclamation.

The two resolutions referred to above were as follows :

RESOLUTION III

The All-India Muslim League notes with deep satisfaction the steadfast loyalty of the Mussulman Community to the British Crown during the present crisis through which the Empire is passing, and it assures the Government that the Government may continue to rely upon the loyal adhesion to and support of the Imperial cause by the Mussulmans of India, and pray that this assurance may be conveyed to H. M. the King Emperor.

RESOLUTION IV

The All-India Muslim League desires once more to place on record its deep and grateful appreciation of the great and valuable services rendered to India by His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge of Penshurt, during the past five years, and the feelings of regret with which it has received the intimation that his term of office is, as at present arranged, to cease in March next. The League, while recognizing the arduous character of the strain that had been placed on His Excellency during the past few years, under circumstances which have made his continuance in office an act of high sacrifice, venture, none the less, in view of the affection in which Lord Hardinge is held by the people of India, and the trust that they repose in him, and important questions which will arise for consideration after the war, to urge upon His Majesty's Government the desirability of asking His Excellency to agree to a further extension of his Viceroyalty.

The President next called upon Mr. M. A. Jinnah to move the next resolution. Mr. Mohani said, 'I rise to a point of order. My motion is for adjournment, and it must be discussed first.' The President said : 'I have already informed you that your motion is out of order.' (Cries of 'Sit down. Do not dictate to the Chair').

At this stage, Maulvi Abdul Rauf Khan, Secretary of Anjunmane-zia-ul-Islam of Bombay, who was occupying a seat among the visitors, rose and shouted, demanding that Mr. Mohani should be allowed to speak. He said that the meeting was of Mahommedans and not of Hindus. Then followed some confusion, but peace was soon restored. The President appealed to the audience to believe that he was not acting in a despotic manner. He said that he firmly believed in the word of his God, and quoted a verse from the Quran. He asked them to put faith in His words if they were Mahommedans. At this, another Mahommedan from a visitor's seat, got up and said, 'If you

are a Mahommedan, you ought to appear like a Mahommedan. The Holy Quran asks you to dress like a Mahommedan. You must speak the Mahommedan tongue. You pose to be a Mahommedan leader, but you can never be a Mahommedan leader.' Wild scenes of disorder then ensued, when a number of men began to shout and became rowdy.

In the midst of disorder and confusion, Abdussamad Khan, head of the Pathan Community of Bombay, Maulvi Abdul Rauf and several other Mahommedans, followed by Sirdar Suleman Haji Qasim Mitha, C. I. E., who was in the beginning against the Muslim League holding its Session at Bombay, but who subsequently was party to the compromise, rushed towards the dais and began to speak vehemently. The Pathan leader said that he objected to the proceedings being conducted in any language but Urdu or Farsi. As the proceedings of the meeting affected the Mahommedans, he said that he wanted to follow what was being said there; and pointed out that besides himself many others present at the meeting did not know English. How were they to know that nothing against Mahommedan interests was being said, he asked. A voice from behind shouted that the President yesterday had spoken of Hindu governor of Kabul. The Pathan leader was then called up to the dais by some Mahommedan leaders, and the President shook hands with him. They pacified him and assured him that the remainder of the business could be conducted in Urdu. These leaders succeeded in restoring order temporarily, and further decided to allow Mr. Hasrat Mohani to address the meeting.

Speaking in Urdu, Mr. Hasrat Mohani said that he belonged to no party, and that he did not want to say anything against the President. He urged that they had arrived at a compromise to pass only three resolutions, and that they ought to adjourn after passing the self-government resolution. This was followed again by shouts, asking what guarantee there was that the same resolution, with the terms agreed upon at the compromise meeting, would be moved.

Mr. Qasim Mitha said that he could not yet understand why they had conducted the proceedings in English on the previous day. He reminded the audience that on the first day they brought Congress leaders to the meeting and lustily cheered them, and said that they were transacting business in the name of the All-India Muslim League, but they were a Congress body.

Moulvi Abdul Rauf said that at all meetings the loyalty resolution was put first, and asked the reason for passing the two condolence resolutions on the first day.

The President assured every one that they would not alter the self-government resolution as drafted and settled at the compromise meeting even by one letter. At this, the same gentleman who had taken objection to the dress and appearance of the President said that they could not rely on a Kafir Mussulman who did not dress like a Mahommedan and keep his beard. Maulvi Abdul Rauf said that they had not come there to hear from the

President that his word was God's word. Mr. Qasim Mitha then became more excited and said that they were merging the League into the Congress, and were acting as dictated by the Congress leaders, that they had upset the object with which he and other Mahommedan leaders had established the League. They had sunk the League in darkness, he said, and were wiping it out of existence and were converting it into the Congress.

Tumultuous and wild scenes continued for some time, the dissentients blocking the passage and making it impossible for business to continue. The leaders on the dais preserved great coolness; and while the disturbance grew greater, they managed successfully to send all the ladies away in motor cars through the back entrance. Thinking it impossible to proceed with the business, the President after consulting the leaders, adjourned the meeting, remarking that it was his great misfortune that he had to adopt such a course; but he and all his Muslim friends believed that was the wisest course to take under the circumstances that then prevailed. The leaders retired to the President's room and stayed there nearly an hour until the rowdy element had dispersed. No further disturbance occurred, and the President was cheered when he left.

The question whether the Session would be continued, and if so when, where and under what restrictions, was decided immediately at an informal meeting convened at the residence of the President.

THIRD SITTING

1 January 1916, 10 a.m.

The All-India Muslim League resumed its sittings on Saturday at the Taj Mahal Hotel. Only members of the League and representatives of the press were admitted. This adjourned meeting will be recorded as an historic meeting in the annals of the political progress of the Muslim Community and the country.... The very circumstances that brought about the adjournment of the second day's meeting, contributed in a great measure to make the conduct of this adjourned meeting a model of sobriety, dignity and determination. All were animated by the spirit of unshakable unity. This was indeed a gathering of earnest men, resolved to discharge grave and responsible functions.

Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haque, the President, opened the meeting by a speech in which he said that before the members proceeded with the business of the day, he thought it was only right that he should make a few remarks as to the conditions under which they met there that day. He wished to emphasize that the attendance at the Annual Session of the League was confined principally to members of the League, and at that day's meeting nobody else but members of the League would be allowed there, members of the press being excepted. He reminded them that since the League had being started, it was their custom to admit other members of the public merely as matter of courtesy, other-

wise they had no right to attend the meeting, much less to vote. At the first day's sitting of the League they admitted them only as a matter of such courtesy and also because the League was conducting a sort of educative propaganda for the good of the country. He remarked that that was the first occasion in the life of the League that some rather undesirable incidents had occurred.... When at the second day's meeting men came determined, as far as he could see, not to proceed in a constitutional manner, but to create a disturbance, he had to adjourn the meeting. Of course, they could not use force, and the only possible thing to do, therefore, under the circumstances, was to disperse like gentlemen. Islam enjoined dignity, and anything undignified was against the Mahommedan religion. He said that at the meeting on the second day, he had appealed to the people as gentlemen and in the name of God. He had quoted verses from the Holy Quran. But the word of God was not listened to. Any opposition ought to have collapsed immediately on his quoting the sacred verses. But they would not listen and his appeal was infructuous, as they were prepared to create a disturbance. They did not resume their sittings in the pandal, because there might be a repetition of the undesirable incidents of the day before.... Continuing, he said that he personally refused to take any outside help to quell the disturbance on the second day; but his friends of Bombay thought it would be well to speak to the authorities on the matter. His friend, Mr. Jinnah (cheers), went to the authorities and spoke to them, but the help he asked for was denied him (loud cries of 'Shame'). He concluded by expressing the hope that they would conduct the proceedings that day with the dignity which Islam enjoined upon them, and he called upon Mr. Jinnah to address the assembly.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, who was received with loud cheers, then addressed the assembly. He said that they all knew the incidents which took place on 31 December 1915, in the pandal at Marine Lines. After consulting his friends, he thought the proper course for him was to go and see the Commissioner of Police, who was standing outside the pandal. He went to the Commissioner of Police and told him that the meeting of the All India Muslim League had to be adjourned. He also informed him that it was the desire of most of the members of the League that the meeting should continue its deliberations in the pandal, and that under the Constitution of the League nobody but members were entitled to come into the pandal, and certainly none but members could take part in the deliberations. He further told him that they had admitted the public only out of courtesy and by ticket. In view of what had taken place, it was their desire to exclude the public entirely from the meeting, and to confine their proceedings to members of the League only. He asked the Commissioner to help him to carry out their desire. Members of the Public who had come to the pandal on payment of a fee would be refunded the money they had paid, and he had already ordered his men to refund the money instantly. Under the circumstances, he asked the Commissioner of Police to clear the public from the ground of the pandal,

and to keep a certain number of policemen outside, to prevent any member of the public from forcing himself into the pandal. But the Commissioner refused to do so (cries of 'Shame'), and said if Mr. Jinnah apprehended any disturbance he (the Commissioner) was prepared to take charge of the pandal and clear it of every one. He (Mr. Jinnah) came back and told the President and others what had happened, and after that it was decided informally that the matter would be considered further. An informal meeting subsequently took place at the bungalow of the President, when all the leading members of the League were present. It was decided to hold the adjourned meeting of the League at the Taj Mahal Hotel and to admit only members and nobody else.

Mr. A. Rasul said that he had also been present, and heard the Commissioner say that in his opinion the meeting should not be held in the pandal at all.

Mr. Jinnah corroborated the statement.

The President then called upon Mr. M. A. Jinnah to move the following resolutions :

RESOLUTION V

The All-India Muslim League resolve that a committee consisting of the following gentlemen be appointed to formulate and frame a scheme of reforms, and that the said Committee is authorized to confer with political and other organizations or committees if any, appointed by such organizations as they may deem fit, provided always that due regard is paid to the needs and interests of the Mussulmans of India in the formation of the aforesaid scheme of reforms.

The Committee shall submit its report and scheme to the Council of the All-India Muslim League to be presented to the League at its next Annual Session.

Mr. Jinnah said that in view of the present situation, when questions of the readjustment and reconstruction of the Government of India would soon be taken up, it was desirable that a committee consisting of responsible leaders of the Mahommedans should be appointed to formulate a scheme of reforms. He did not want to go into details, and would content himself by saying that the object of the resolution was to formulate a scheme of reforms. As to the second part of this resolution, it empowered this Committee, whilst formulating a scheme of reforms, to confer with other political organisations of the country, such as the Indian National Congress. The Congress and the League were the two chief representative political organisations of India: and the Committee of the League should, without the slightest prejudice to Mahommedan interests and with the due regard to Mahommedan needs, formulate a scheme of reforms, and do it as far as possible in conformity with the scheme to be formulated by the Indian National Congress. After the

scheme had been formulated by the League and the Congress, they could go to the authorities and say these were the reforms which they demanded in the name of United India (loud applause).

Mr. Wazir Hasan then read out the list of the names of proposed members of the Committee, and several names suggested by those present were added to it. The names of the members are given below :

UNITED PROVINCES OF AGRA AND OUDH

1. Raja Sir Mahommed Ali Mahommed Khan Bahadur, K.C.I.E. of Mahmudabad (President).
2. Maulvi Abdul Majid, C.I.E., Bar-at-Law, Allahabad.
3. Syed Nabi-ul-lah, Bar-at-law, Lucknow.
4. Khan Bahadur Syed Alay Nabi, B.A. LL. B., Agra.
5. Syed Raza Ali, Moradabad.
6. Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan, Bar-at-Law, Aligarh.
7. Shaikh Shahid Husain, Bar-at-Law, Lucknow.
8. Dr. Nazir-ud-Din Hasan, M.A. LL. B., Bar-at-Law, Lucknow.
9. Mr. M.A. Khwaja, Bar-at-Law, Aligarh.
10. Munshi Azhar Ali, Vakil, Lucknow.
11. Mr. Zahur Ahmed, Bar-at-Law, Allahabad.
12. Mirza Sami-ul-lah Beg, Advocate, Lucknow.
13. Munshi Sakhawat Ali, Lucknow.
14. Syed Zahur Ahmed, Vakil, Lucknow.
15. Syed Wazir Hasan, Advocate, Lucknow (Honorary Secretary).

PUNJAB

1. Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Khan, C.S.I., Lahore.
2. Khan Bahadur Mian Mahommed Shafi, Lahore.
3. Syed Mohsin Shah, Pleader, Lahore.
4. Mr. Barkat Ali, Editor, *Observer*, Lahore.
5. Mr. Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din, Pleader, Kasur.
6. Mr. Fazle Husain, Bar-at-Law, Lahore.
7. Khan Bahadur Shaikh Ghulam Sadiq, Amritsar.
8. Chaudhri Shahab-ud-Din, Vakil, Lahore.
9. Babu Nizam-ud-Din, Amritsar.
10. Maulvi Zafar Ali Khan, Lahore.

BENGAL

1. Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhri, Khan Bahadur, Dacca.
2. Mr. Mahommed Ismail, Barisal.
3. Mr. Mujib-ur-Rahman, Editor, *The Mussulman*, Calcutta.
4. Mr. M. A. Rasul, Bar-at-Law, Calcutta.
5. Nawab Nasir Husain Khan, Khial, Calcutta.
6. Mr. A. K. Fazl-ul-Haq, Calcutta.

7. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Editor, *Al-Hilal*, Calcutta.
8. Maulvi Mahommed Akram Khan, Editor, *Mohammadi*, Calcutta.
9. Maulvi Najm-ud-Din Ahmed, Calcutta.
10. Chaudhri Ali-uz-Zaman, Landlord, Belgachi, District Faridpore.
11. Mr. Abul Qasim, Bardwan.

BOMBAY AND SINDH

1. His Highness the Aga Khan.
2. Sir Ibrahim Rahmat-ul-lah, Kt. Bombay.
3. Mr. Abdul Husain Adamjee Peerbhoy, Bombay.
4. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Bar-at-Law, Bombay.
5. Mr. Bhurgari, Bar-at-Law, Bombay.
6. Mr. Faiz B. Tyabji, Bar-at-Law, Bombay.
7. The Hon'ble Mr. Ghulam Husain, Hyderabad (Sindh).
8. Nawab Ghulam Jilani Khan of Vai District, Satara.
9. Mian Mahommed Haji Jan Mahommed Chotani, Bombay.
10. Mr. Mahommed Hafiz, Bar-at-Law, Hyderabad (Sindh).
11. Mr. Ghulam Ali Chagla, Hyderabad (Sindh).
12. Mr. Omar Subhani, Bombay.
13. Mr. Sheriff D. Kanji, Bombay.
14. Mr. A. M. Jiwanji, Bombay.
15. Mirza Ali Mahommed, M. A., Solicitor, Bombay.

MADRAS

1. M. Yaqub Hasan Seth, Madras.
2. The Hon'ble Nawab Syed Mahommed Sahib, Madras.
3. Nawab Ghulam Ahmed Sahib, Kalami, Mysore State.
4. Khan Bahadur Walji Lalji Sahib, Madras.

BIHAR AND ORISSA

1. Sir Syed Ali Imam, K.C.S.I., Bar-at-Law, Bankipore.
2. Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haque, Bar-at-Law, Bankipore.
3. Mr. Wasi Ahmed, Bar-at-law, Bankipore.
4. Maulvi Fakhru-ud-Din Khan Bahadur, Bankipore.
5. Nawab Sarfaraz Husain, Vakil, Mozaffarpore.
6. Maulvi Ahmed Husain, Vakil, Mozaffarpore.
7. Maulvi Akhtar Husain, Vakil, Mozaffarpore.
8. Dr. Syed Mahmud, Bar-at-Law, Bankipore.
9. Syed Mohammed Naim, Bar-at-Law, Bhagalpore.

CENTRAL PROVINCES

1. Khan Bahadur H. M. Malak, Nagpore.

BURMA

1. Haji Mahommed Abdul Shakur Jamal, C.I.E., Rangoon.
2. Haji Ahmed Mulla Daud, Rangoon.

DELHI

1. Dr. M. A. Ansari, Delhi.
2. Mr. Mahommed Ali (Chandwara, C.P.)
3. Haziq-ul-Mulk Hakim Mahommed Ajmal Khan, Delhi.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

1. *Mr. Abdul Aziz*, Bar-at-Law, Peshawar.

Mr. Fazl-ul-Haque, seconding the resolution, said whatever difficulties there had been in their path had disappeared during the last few hours, and with the new year would be ushered in a new era in the history of the progress of the Mahommedan Community. If he had any lingering doubt that had been dispelled by the incidents of the day before. He had great pleasure in seconding the appointment of the Committee, because the men who were to formulate a scheme of reforms should be men chosen, as these men were, not only for their political foresight, but also for the courage of their convictions. Because they had to confer with other committees, it should not be said that questions of popularity or other considerations prevented them from saying what was in the best interest of the community. The National Congress and the Muslim League between them represented the views of united India.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad seconded the Resolution.

Mr. A. Rasul, supporting the resolution, said he was glad that resolution was to be passed by the Muslim League; but self-government meant self-help, and he was glad his co-religionists had learnt that lesson at last.

Mr. Ghulam Husain, Nawab Ghulam Mahommed Kalami, and Mr. Jafar Lalji further supported the resolution.

Mr. Hasrat Mohani rose to move what he called a 'verbal amendment' adding the words 'a scheme of self-government and steps leading to self-government' instead of the words 'a scheme of reforms'. He said they had been talking for the last thirty years of reforms and it was time they talked of self-government.

Babu Nizam-ud-Din moved another amendment asking the Committee to frame a scheme of reforms 'keeping in view the objects of the League'.

Mr. Jinnah asked the two gentlemen not to press their amendments.

Both the amendments were then withdrawn, Mr. Hasrat Mohani declaring that he had only moved this to assert his right of moving an amendment (loud laughter).

The President said he was very pleased at the withdrawal of the amendments. There was no split in the League. It showed the true Islamic spirit (cheers). They were not going to move one iota away from it. They were all

honourable men (cheers).

The resolution moved by Mr. M. A. Jinnah was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION VI

Syed Alay Nabi moved the following resolution :

The All-India Muslim League, once again, records its deliberate opinion that in the interests of the Mussulman Community, it is absolutely necessary that the principle of communal representation be extended to all self-governing public bodies, and respectfully urges that provision for the adequate and effective representation of Mussulman on municipal and district boards is a necessary corollary of the application of the principle to the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, and at the same time, considers it essential to the successful working of those public bodies.

Syed Alay Nabi said that the principle of communal representation, the Mahommedans believed, was a necessary factor in their national development. It was an anomally and an irony of fate that, while the principle of communal representation was recognized in regard to the Legislative Council, it had been ignored with regard to local bodies. The Mahommedans did not want to pass this resolution in a spirit of racial or religious animosity, but only with a view to be able to march forward with other communities to their final goal.

Mr. Yaqub Husain Seth, seconding the resolution, said that there was no question more misunderstood than this, but now that the atmosphere of mutual distrust had cleared away, there was a greater chance of their case being given an attentive hearing. As their Hindu brethren now viewed this question from a different angle of vision than before, the Mahommedans should reciprocate. The Mahommedans should ask that instead of having Government nominees who were not always of a desirable type, the Mahommedans should be allowed to elect their representatives. Harmony between the two great communities of India could be better secured by having separate channels of election, for then there would be no rivalry for the common seats.

Mr. Mohsin Shah, supported the resolution. He said that wherever their principle of communal representation was recognized, a better spirit prevailed. If Mahommedans insisted on separate representation, it was only because they desired that their relations with Hindus should be better still.

Mr. Hasrat Mohani opposed this resolution. He said that in the first instance it was a superfluous resolution. Secondly, in view of the fact that the committees of the League and the Congress were to meet this resolution might harm and might prove a stumbling block to those committees in their consideration of the question of reforms on higher grounds. Besides, according to the compromise, no other resolutions than those they had already passed were to be brought forward.

Mr. Jinnah explained the circumstances under which the compromise meeting s held under the presidency of H. E. Lord Wellington. Certain

points were discussed, and an agreement was arrived at between the two parties in Bombay. Not everything was discussed, but eventually some points were agreed upon, and then he drew the attention of the Governor to the fact that there was a very strong opinion and feeling among the Mahommedans about the question with the overwhelming majority of his co-religionists in the matter, but liberty should be preserved to discuss the question So far as the terms of the agreement were concerned, they were not going against them at all.

Mr. A. M. Khwaja moved an amendment deferring the consideration of this question until the Committee appointed by the League and the Congress had deliberated together. At the same time, he thought that they should not let the Mahommedan public think that this meeting was opposed to separate representation. There were others who believed that separate representation was simply a toy (sic).

Mr. Abbas Ali supported the amendment.

Mr. Hamid Hasan thought that they would be doing a great disservice to the community by dropping this resolution. An apprehension prevailed among some in this city, and the rest of the country, that the League was trying to surrender to the Congress (cries of 'No, no'). He admitted the apprehension was untrue, but they would be encouraging that belief by dropping the resolution. In any scheme of reforms, the principle of communal representation should be the sheet-anchor of their policy.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah said that if they insisted on putting the amendments to the vote, the voting would, according to the Constitution, be by Provinces, and it would be a tedious process. The amendments were sure to be lost, and he therefore requested the movers to withdraw them.

The President then put the resolution to the vote, and declared it carried by a majority.

Syed Alay Nabi said the resolution should be declared as having been carried by an overwhelming majority.

It was eventually declared carried by a large majority.

ELECTION

Sir Ebrahim Rahmat-ul-lah moved that the Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad be elected President of the Muslim League (loud cheers). Since H. H. the Aga Khan had resigned this position, they had had no President for two years because it was only at their annual sessions that they could elect their President, and last year there had been no session of the League. He thought that their rules should be so amended that they might not be without a President in the future. Some years ago, when he read the names of prominent members of the League and he came across the name of the Hon'ble Raja Sahib he had come to a hasty conclusion that probably the Raja Sahib was one of those Nawabs of the old school, with plenty of money, either their own

or borrowed (laughter), involved in an atmosphere of pleasure, surrounded by sycophants and flatterers. But about three years ago, when he came to know the Raja personally, he was completely disillusioned. The speaker had a genuine feeling of admiration for the Hon'ble Raja Sahib, for his independence of character, his great gifts and his sterling worth, his great love for the country and his desire to serve it. He said this out of all sincerity and not merely with a view to paying an empty compliment.

Mr. Nabi-ul-lah seconded the resolution, which was supported by Mr. Sheriff Devji Kanji and others. It was carried unanimously amid loud and prolonged cheering.

Mr. Wasi Ahmed of Bankipore then moved the re-election of Mr. Wazir Hasan as Honorary Secretary of the League. He said that had it not been for Mr. Wazir Hasan and three prominent citizens of Bombay, Sir Ibrahim Rahmat-ul-lah, Mr. M. A. Jinnah and Mr. Abdul Husain Adamji Peerbhoy (loud cheers), who assisted him, the League could not have held its session in Bombay.

Mr. A. M. Khwaja seconded the resolution, which also supported by Mr. Abdul Hamid Hasan, Mr. Mohsin Shah and others, was carried by acclamation.

Mr. Wazir Hasan briefly replied, and said that it was an honour of which he would be proud for ever.

On the motion of Syed Wazir Hasan, seconded by Mr. Sami-ul-lah Beg, Haji Musa Khan and Mr. Azhar Ali were re-elected Honorary Secretaries of the All-India Muslim League.

OTHER BUSINESS

Maulvi Abdul Wadud then wanted to move certain resolutions. The President said he had just handed him a couple of resolutions. They were out of order because, under the rules, previous notice should have been given to the Secretary about them. He would, however, put it to the house to say whether the resolutions should be allowed to be moved or not.

Mr. Jinnah said that the President did not want to be despotic. He could, with justice, have said that the resolutions were out in order as no notice had been given. He, however, put it to the meeting to say whether they should be allowed to be placed before the meeting. It was a serious matter and he wanted them to rise to the occasion.

Mr. Nizam-ud-Din Ahmed said that they should adhere to the compromise and not allow any other resolutions.

The President then put the question to the meeting, and there were loud cries of 'No' against the resolutions being put. The President declared that the sense was against the resolutions being put.

Mr. Hasrat Mohani : This is exactly what I wanted.

Mr. Faiz B. Tayabji moved a vote of thanks to the Chair. He said that

they had all seen how ably Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haque had conducted the business of the League (cheers).

Mr. Mirza Ali Mahommed, seconding the resolution, said that this was no mere formal vote of thanks. It was their President's tact and heroic conduct that had saved the situation, which might easily have been disastrous. Was there anybody here, or anywhere in the city of Bombay, or in the whole country, who claimed to be an educated person, who could say that they were not stronger that day then they had been the day before ('Hear, hear'). And they owed that result to the tact and ability of their President (loud applause). At the time of that unfortunate incident, there were only two courses open to them, the first was rejection and the second adjournment. And they all agreed that the wiser of the two was the course they eventually took. They hoped to be stronger and more united in the future. Even if they had not been able to meet, they would have risen phoenix-like from their ashes, having got rid of the undesirable exigencies of the past few years (loud cheers).

The Resolution was carried amid loud and continued cheering.

Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haque in reply said that the day before yesterday he had considered that as the proudest day of his life, but he now found that he was mistaken. For, this day was the proudest day of his life (loud applause). They had risen Phoenix-like from the ashes. Opposition stiffened them; with the result that they were much stronger now than before. He thought that he would fail in his duty, if he did not refer to the great work done for the League by his friend Mr. Jinnah (loud and continued applause). The entire Mahommedan community of India owed him a deep debt of gratitude, for without his exertions they could not have met in Bombay. The President knew what Mr. Jinnah had undergone in this matter. Turning to Mr. Jinnah, the President said, 'Mr. Jinnah ! we the Mussulmans of India thank you' (loud cheers).

Continuing, the President thanked the members of the Reception Committee. He could not describe the hearty character of the Reception they had given him. He had been so well treated by his co-religionists of Bombay that he would never forget it. There might be a few people who had their own axes to grind, but the heart of Mahommedan Bombay was with the League (loud applause). He also praised the work of the volunteers who had performed their duties right royally. Referring to the presence of the Congress volunteers of the two great bodies working together, and he hoped the work of the volunteers would be carried on the same principle in the future. It was no use fighting for small things, and they had got to realize it. The Mahommedans, Hindus, Parsis, and all the other communities of India should work hand in hand. He did not see any Congress volunteers at the meeting, and he asked the League volunteers to kindly inform the former that the Mahommedans were grateful to them. He again thanked the assembly, and hoped that the next time they came to Bombay they would have

only one party there.

In conclusion, he said their best thanks were due to Mr. Abdul Husain Adamjee Peerbhoy and the other sons of Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy for the magnificent reception they had given to the members of the League and the Congress delegates on Friday night, and thanks were also due to Mr. Abdul Husain for the trouble he had taken as the Chairman of the Reception Committee (loud cheers).

The meeting then dispersed.

Source : Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. I.

22

LETTER FROM C.H.A. HILL (MEMBER OF THE VICEROY'S COUNCIL) TO HARDINGE ?

1 January 1916

In his Presidential address wisely delivered in English, so that the Sunnis should not understand Mazhar-ul-Haq broke the spirit of compromise in every particular. His speech was far more malicious than was reported. When the Sunnis read the translation of his speech next day in the vernacular papers they were furious at the breach of faith and felt (rightly) that they were being made catspaw by the Congress extremists and Mrs. Besant and they were being used as the stalking horse to facilitate the merger of the League and Congress with the Home Rule League. Hence the break up. Luckily there was no violence.

Source : **Hardinge Papers, 1916.**

23

REPORT FROM L. ROBERTSON, SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY, ON THE DISTURBANCES IN THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE SESSION

I am directed to make the following report regarding the recent meeting of the All-India Moslem League in Bombay, December 1915.

2. In order to understand the situation as it ultimately developed, it is necessary to survey briefly the history of the meeting of the League at Bombay. On the 12th April 1915, a letter of which I am to enclose a copy (Enclosure A) was despatched by Mr. Mahommed Ali Jinnah, Barrister-at-Law, to the Secretary of the All-India Moslem League at Lucknow, in which it was stated that the signatories, 29 in number, believed that there was a strong feeling amongst the Mussulmans generally all over this country and in particular amongst those of Bombay that the All-India Moslem League should hold its next meeting in Bombay, and the signatories therefore cordially invited the League to meet at Bombay during the Christmas holidays. Immediately after this letter was sent, it was brought to the notice of Government that there was in fact very considerable opposition to the proposal contained in the letter. It will be noticed that the letter did not emanate from the Provincial Branch of the All-India Moslem League, and, on this ground, Sirdar Saheb Sulleman Cassim Mitha, C.I.E., the Vice President of the Provincial Branch of the League, had refused to sign the letter when he was first asked to do so.

3. But the opposition was based on wider grounds than on the mere technical objection that the invitation did not emanate from the local branch of the League.

4. When His Highness the Aga Khan left for Europe at the beginning of April 1915, he wrote to the Hon'ble Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy Ebrahim to the following effect : 'If the Congress meets in Bombay, I think the League should come to Bombay also. You are welcome to put this view of mine before any one you like.' It will be observed that, while it is not distinctly stated in the letter, the words used by His Highness the Aga Khan foreshadowed some sort of union between the League and the National Congress. Throughout the negotiations that following the fear that the holding of a meeting of the League at Bombay syncronously with the assembly of the National Congress would result in an union between the two bodies has been the dominant motive that has inspired the local opposition to the meeting of the League at Bombay—specially amongst the Sunni Mahommedans of the City. This fear, however, was not the only reason of the opposition. The main grounds of objection may be stated as follows :

(*a*) Intimate coalition with the National Congress can do no good to the Moslem cause and may do it much harm;

(*b*) It is eminently undesirable at this juncture to do anything which will in any way embarrass Government;

(*c*) The Mussulmans of India are ultimately more likely to get fair treatment by holding aloof from the Hindu political crusade than by coalescing with the Hindus whose wants are not identical with those of the Mahommedans.

(*d*) It is thought that the Extreme Hindu Party of the League might jettisen one or two items in their programme in order to join the Congress again and the local Sunni Mahommedans did not wish to be associated in any

way with that party; and

(e) Mr. Jinnah and the Khojas generally are not orthodox Mahommedans and should not be permitted to drag the Sunnis into difficulties which could not be foreseen in detail at the time.

The strength of the opposition may be gauged by a perusal of a letter, (Enclosure B) dated the 29th April 1915, written Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy to Mr. Vazir Hasan; a letter (Enclosure C) dated the 26th May 1915, written by Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy to Mr. Jinnah, and a letter (Enclosure D) dated the 2nd June 1915, written by Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy to Mr. Vazir Hasan. It is also to be noticed that practically all the Sunni Mahommedans who had signed the first invitation to the League withdrew their signatures and publicly announced the fact in a letter dated the 27th April 1915, which is reproduced in the accompanying extract (Enclosure B) from '*The Times of India*', dated the 2nd June 1915. All this evidence makes it perfectly clear that from the very outset the local Mahommedans, especially the local Sunni Mahommedans, were entirely opposed to a meeting of the League at Bombay at the same time as the National Congress. It is not necessary to review in any detail the long and bitter newspaper controversy that was carried on between June and the meeting of the League at the end of December last. On the 11th August, it was reported that Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy had received a letter from His Highness the Aga Khan dated the 14th July 1915, in which the latter stated that in his opinion it was highly undesirable to have a joint meeting of the League and the Congress in Bombay during the period of the war, and he advised the postponement of even the ordinary meetings of the Moslem League so long as England and Turkey were at war. On the 23d November however, His Highness again telegraphed to Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy in a telegram in which he had stated that he had advised the late Sir Pherozshah Mehta and the League that neither body should meet during 1915 and that he still held to his opinion, but if the Congress was to be held, he saw no great objection to a meeting of the League also. His Highness has, therefore, changed his opinion on three occasions but throughout, it will be observed that he has adhered to the view that there was no objection to a simultaneous meeting of the League and the Congress in Bombay.

5. Meanwhile, the controversy continued, Government were approached both directly and indirectly by both parties but throughout the attitude of the Government has been that, while deprecating any political meetings during the present crisis, they would not interfere in the internal controversy in the Mussulman community on the question whether the League should or should not meet in Bombay in December. This was distinctly conveyed to the Hon'ble Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy in a letter, dated the 14th June 1915, where it was stated that Government had no part in the controversy and did not intend to intervene.

6. On the 7th November 1915, the Hon'ble Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy made a last appeal to the League in a letter addressed to the Honorary

Secretary, a copy (Enclosure F) of which is enclosed. At their meeting on the 10th November 1915, however, that Council of the All-India Moslem League decided that the ensuing session should be held at Bombay. Mr. Vazir Hasan, the Secretary of the All-India Moslem League, then proceeded to Bombay. A Reception Committee was formed of which the members were almost entirely Shias, and active preparations were made for the meeting. The Local Mahommedans felt that their sentiments had been entirely disregarded and their opposition to the meeting of the League had increased rather than abated. In order to give expression to their feelings, a mass meeting of the Mahommedans of Bombay was held on the 4th December 1915 in Bhendi Bazar. This meeting was truly representative of the Mahommedans of Bombay, especially the Sunni Mahommedans. It was attended by the head of every *Jamat* and the numbers of that were present are said to have reached 5,000. The party working for the League attempted to belittle the importance of this meeting by disgraceful attacks in the Press, and this Press campaign only served to exacerbate the feeling. The controversy had thus reached a climax. It was, therefore, decided to call a meeting of the principal leaders. The meeting was accordingly held under the Presidentship of His Excellency the Governor at the Secretariat on the 9th December 1915, when a compromise was reached. I am to enclose a copy (Enclosure G) of the statement which was issued to the Press after this meeting.

7. On the 18th December 1915, the Secretary of the All-India Moslem League issued an Agenda (Enclosure B) for a meeting of the Council which was to be held on the 27th idem. It was necessary to call upon the Secretary to amend the agenda so as to bring it within the spirit and the letter of the agreement. A copy of the supplementary agenda (Enclosure I) which was issued subsequently is also enclosed. So far as is known, all parties were determined to adhere to the agreement. But it was understood that at the Council Meeting of the League which was held on the 27th December, certain Mahommedans from up country announced that they were not willing to abide by it, but as they were in a small minority, it was not thought any grave trouble would ensure.

8. The first meeting of the League was held in a specially erected pavilion on the Kennedy Sea Face near Marine Lines Station in Bombay on the 30th December 1915 when Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq read his presidential address in English. The meeting, then adjourned to the following day. A large proportion of the Mahommedans assembled were ignorant of the English language and did not understand what was being said. During the course of the evening, however, the speech was translated in the vernaculars and was available the following morning for the perusal of those who could not read English. Strong feeling was aroused when it was discovered that the speech travelled far beyond what was understood to be the spirit of the agreement. Objection was taken more especially to the passages which referred to joint action with the Congress, the internment of Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali

and the action taken under the Press Act against their newspapers. The League assembled at 2 P.M. on the 31st December 1915, and the two resolutions put from the Chair on the subject of Loyalty to the British Crown and the extension of Lord Hardinge's term of office of Viceroy were carried without any opposition. As to the subsequent proceedings, I am to refer to the enclosed copy of a telegram (Enclosure J) which was transmitted all over India by the Associated Press on the same day, which, in the opinion of Government, contains an unvarnished account of the proceedings. In one particular, however, the telegram is inaccurate, namely, the police dispositions. The Commissioner of Police sent about 80 men to be concealed in the Light Horse Riding School close by the pandal. They arrived about an hour before the meeting. Of the 80 men, 40 were ordinary foot police with their batons, and 40 were men of the armed reserve without fire arms or side arms but carrying lathis. This force of police was intended to be used in case of serious rioting.

It will be seen that the rowdyism started with the intervention of a certain Maulvi, named Fazl-ul-Hasan Hasrat Mohani, B.A., of Aligarh, who insisted on asserting his right to speak. It has not been satisfactorily ascertained what the motives of this gentleman were, but it is not impossible that he intended to make a violent declaration against the action of Government in connection with the meeting of the League, and that this intention was known at least to the President. The Bombay oppositions seized the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction with the Speech of the President on the previous day. The scene ended in great confusion, but no violence used, and, ultimately, the President adjourned the sitting sine die. On the following day, a meeting was held with closed doors at the Taj Mahal Hotel when the resolutions that had been decided upon were passed.

9. As the Government of India are aware, the Bombay City Police have been accused of breaking up the meeting. It is clear, however, that beyond taking precautions to deal with any outbreak of violence that might have occurred, the police did not interfere in any way whatever with the proceedings. The attitude of the Commissioner of Police, throughout, has been perfectly correct. A great deal has been said with reference to the conversation which he had at the time with Mr. Jinnah. From the enclosed copy of a note (Enclosure K) recorded by the Commissioner of Police on the occurrence, it will be observed that the Commissioner of Police was asked to exclude all those whom Mr. Jinnah did not wish to see in the pavilion. As these present had all either paid for or received tickets for the assembly and as the meeting was a public meeting which had been advertised by handbills and newspaper advertisements, it would not have been correct for the Police to have acted in such a manner as to convert it into a private meeting and they would have laid themselves open to serious indictment at the hands of those whom they might exclude. It was the duty of the police to clear the pavilion on the occasion of an outbreak of actual violence. As a matter of fact, however, the meeting broke up in confusion without violence having been

used, and the police were not called to intervene.

ENCLOSURE A.

Bombay, the 12th April 1915

To

The Honorary Secretary,
All-India Moslem League,
Lucknow.

Dear Sir,

We believe that there is strong feeling and desire amongst the Mussulmans generally all over this country and in particular amongst these of Bombay that the All-India Moslem League should hold its next meeting in Bombay. Out of regard for and in response to those feelings we, the under mentioned signatories, beg most cordially to invite the All-India Moslem League to Bombay this year and to meet here during the Christmas holidays and request you to place this matter before the Council of the All-India Moslem League for their acceptance.

Trusting that it will meet with their approval and sanction.

We are, Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

Currimbhoy Ebrahim,
Mahommed Ali Jinnah,
Aboobaker Abdurrahaman,
Kazi Khairuddin,
Abdul Kadir Haji Gool Mahommed,
Cassamally Jairazbhoy,
Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy,
Mahommed Ali Currumbhoy,
Salebhoy K. Barodwala,
Syed Ali Edroos,
Mahommed Hajibhoy,
Fazulbhoy J. Lalji,
H. Suleman Abdul Waheed,
Abdullabhoy Lalji,
Syed Gulam Mahommed Rafaie,
Hakim Mahommed Wazeer,
Rahimutullah Currimbhoy,
Jaffer Hajeebhoy,
Sheriff D. Canji,
Abdoola Abdool Rahim,
J.R. Sayani,
M.R. Sayani,
M.H. Muckba,
Abdul Sattar A. Gaya,
Abdul Kadir Abdulbhoy,
Haji C. Shurd Dauji,
M. A. Khandwani,
Mirza Ali Mahommed Khan,
Mian Mahommed Haji Jan Mahommed Chotani.

AGENDA

ALL INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE

A meeting of the Council of the All-India Moslem League will be held at the office of the League on the 6th June 1915, at 8 A. M., to consider the following questions. Kindly attend the meeting or send me your written opinion.

PROPOSALS

(1) The fixing of a place for holding the next Annual Sessions of the All-India Moslem League.

The League has received invitation from the Mahommedans of Bombay. A copy of the said invitation is herewith annexed.

In this connection, it will not be out of place to state that the Annual Sessions of the League was never held before in Bombay. This year the Annual Sessions of the Mahommedan Educational Conference will also be held in Poona. It will be, therefore, easy for the Mahommedans to attend the meetings of the Educational Conference and after that the meetings of the League in Bombay.

(2) The election of Nawab Ali Hassan Khan Saheb of Lucknow as a Member of the Council of the League.

(3) The election of Mr. Tasadduque Ahmed Khan Sherwani Bar-at-Law, of Aligarh, as a member of the All-India Moslem League.

(4) The election of Syed Mirjan Saheb of Lucknow as a Member of the All-India Moslem League.

(5) Any other matter that may come up for discussion.

Blund Bagh Road, Lucknow
15th May 1915.

Syed Vazir Hassan
Honorary Secretary
All-India Moslem League.

ENCLOSURE B.

13, Esplanade Road,
Bombay, the 29th April 1915

My Dear Mr. Vazir Hassan,

While I was at Mahabaleshwar last week, Mr. Jinnah had forwarded to you a representation signed by a few leading Bombay Mahommedans suggesting that the Sessions of the League this year be held at Bombay. On my return here, however, I have met some more of the influential people who have expressed to me their opinion that it will not be desirable to have the Sessions in Bombay if the war is not over before that time, in view of the present situation of Turkey, and I write this to you just to tell you that there is such a feeling too.

Yours sincerely,
(sd) Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy.

ENCLOSURE C

13, Esplanade Road,
Bombay the 26th May 1915

My Dear Jinnah,

When we agreed upon a Requisition to invite the All-India Muslem League to meet this year in Bombay I understood that you would obtain the unanimous support and the signatures of all the leading men in the community, including the Hon'ble Mr. Fazulbhoy Chinoy, and Mr. Sulleman Cassim Mitha. I, however, find that they have remained aloof and not put their signatures on the Requisition as they are not in favour of the same. Under the circumstances, you ought not to have sent the invitation to Lucknow, but kept it back, in view of the opposition to the movements, and I wish you had informed me about the disagreement, before sending the Requisition to Lucknow. As I am in Bombay and in close touch with the public feelings, I find that there is considerable opposition to the proposal, which it would be foolish to ignore. There is a growing feeling in Bombay that a meeting of the Muslim League is, for political reasons, inadvisable at a time when war with Turkey may still be in progress and when the question of the future of the Caliphate and other matters of the utmost importance to Islam, may as yet be undecided.

I believe you will agree with me in informing Mr. Vazir Hassan about the public feeling in Bombay and about the inadvisability of holding the next Sessions in Bombay. I would have waited to discuss the matter with you when you returned to Bombay but as the Requisition from Bombay will be considered at a meeting of the League on the 6th of June next, I thought it would be better if I informed you immediately of the opposition, so that the idea of holding the Sessions in Bombay may be abandoned. I am, therefore, sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Vazir Hassan, so that he may be in possession of the opinion in Bombay and decide not to hold the League meeting this year.

I have given very careful thought to the whole matter, and I honestly believe that it will be in the best interests of the community itself, if the Sessions were not held this year, looking to the general situation as it stands today.

Hoping you are well, and with very kind regards,

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy

ENCLOSURE D

13, Esplanade Road,
Bombay, the 2nd June 1915

My Dear Mr. Vazir Hassan,

You must have been now in possession of my letter of the 26th May, together with the copy of my letter to Mr. Jinnah, and my reasons for not holding the next Sessions of the League in Bombay.

Since I wrote to you last, I find that the opposition is becoming more marked, and my father, Sir Currimbhoy, and my brothers are also of opinion that the meeting should not be held in Bombay. I hope you will place this information before the Council at their meeting on the 6th instant and advise them to decide not to hold the next Sessions in Bombay, in view of the political situation.

Yours sincerely,
Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy

ENCLOSURE E

EXTRACT FROM 'THE TIMES OF INDIA', 2 June 1915
ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE

In connection with the Requisition signed by a number of Mahommedan inhabitants of Bombay inviting the All-India Moslem League to hold its next Sessions in Bombay, which was published in our issue of Yesterday, we learn that the following letter was sent to Mr. Jinnah, who took the initiative in the movement by certain gentlemen who were in the first place signatories to the Requisitions.

Sir, We, the undersigned, beg to inform you that we signed a circular letter sent by you through Mr. Habibur Rahman yesterday under the impression that a preliminary meeting of the leading Mahommedans was to be held to consider the advisability of inviting the All-India Moslem League to hold its next Sessions in Bombay. The letter should not be considered an invitation by itself, otherwise we notify that we withdraw our signatures-M.A. Khandwani, Haji Habib, Haji Karim, A G. Rafai, Hakim Mohammed Dayam (Secretary, Anjumane Islam), Abdulla Abdurrahim, Haji Abdul Rehman. Kadwani, Aboobaker Abdurrahman, Haji Yoosuf H. E. Sobani, Abdul Sattar Ayub Gaya, M.H. Muckba, and Kazi Kabiruddin.

The letter was dated April 27, and received by Mr. Jinnah on the 1st of May. A copy of the same was duly sent to the Honorary Secretary of the All-India Moslem League, Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy, who was one of the signatories to the Requisition, being convinced of the public feeling against the movement also addressed a letter on the 5th of May to the Honorary Secretary of the Moslem League advising him against the holding of the next Sessions in Bombay. Notwithstanding it, the circular letter of invitation,

appears in the agenda (dated May 15) of the meeting of the Moslem League to be held at Lucknow on the 6th instant, without any mention of the letter of protest sent to Mr. Jinnah or of the letter sent by Sir Fazulbhoy to the Honorary Secretary. It is to be noted also that the Bombay Presidency Moslem League, a recognised branch of the All-India Moslem League has been kept in the dark regarding this movement, and such well-known spokesmen of the community as the Hon'ble Maulvi Rafiuddin Ahmed, Sir Ebrahim Rahimtoola, and Mr. Fazulbhoy Chinoy have been ignored.

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ENCLOSURE F

18, Esplanade Road,
Bombay, the 7th November 1915

To

Vazir Hassan Esquire,
Honorary Secretary,
All-India Moslem League,
Lucknow.

Dear Sir,

In your recently published Note on the All-India Moslem League, you speak of putting 'the real issue in its true perspective' but as a number of essential facts appear to have escaped your notice, I must supplement your Note and urge upon you the necessity of scanning the political horizon again from, to use a current common place, a new and wider angle of vision. Last month, the following telegrams, passed between us, and, as will be seen from my telegrams I offered to personally come to Lucknow and explain my reasons, but without giving me this opportunity of a personal explanation you have deemed it fit to issue the agenda of the next meeting of the Council of the League together with your Note which is the subject of this letter.

TELEGRAM, dated the 21th October 1915

'May we propose you President for next League Session?' Critical situation. Trust you will come forward.' —Vazir Hassan

TELEGRAM, dated the 23rd October 1915

'Telegram, received. Your proposal under consideration. Wire date Council meeting. Wish to attend. Will explain position.'

—Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy

TELEGRAM, dated the 25th October 1915

'Your telegram. Thanks. Epoch-making Session. Your name will go down to posterity as benefactor. You will be in position to advise Mussulmans of India. Can control proceedings. For goodness sake accept it.

Proposing your name in agenda does not bind you. Council meeting 11th November. Please come. Issuing agenda shortly. Wire reply immediately.'

—Vazir Hassan

TELEGRAM dated 25th October 1915

'Telegram received. Unable at present agree. Please do not place my name on Agenda.' —Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy

You rightly observe that I approved of the project of holding the sessions in Bombay when the question was mooted at Delhi in March last but it is not correct that I subsequently left all the work to Mr. Jinnah. On my return to Bombay I at once set to work at it and one of my first acts was to write to His Highness the Aga Khan enroute to Europe after ascertaining from him that he thought that if the Congress met in Bombay the Moslem League should likewise do so. Mr. Jinnah and myself consulted together with the result that the requisition was drawn up and left with Mr. Jinnah for circulation for signatures as I had now to leave for Mahableshwar. So far no murmur of dissent was heard except that there appeared to be a feeling among some members of the Provincial League that it was their function to send an invitation to the parent society. As we now know the signature of some of the prominent Mahommedan leaders were not obtained and it is from this initial mistake that we may consider all this subsequent division and trouble to have arisen. The letter was sent off without having obtained the signatures of leaders like the Hon'ble Sir Ibrahim Rahimatulla, the late Hon'ble Mr. F. M. Chinoy and Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha, as Mr. Jinnah appears himself to have been in a hurry to leave for Ootacamund. If their signatures had been obtained all the troubles that have now arisen could have been avoided. • Mr. Jinnah's commission to do so is only emphasized by the elaborate defence he puts forward in his letter of 30th May which you have quoted in your Note. Sir Ibrahim was within easy reach of Bombay and the late Mr. Chinoy was then for some time in town but, as I learnt afterwards, was unwilling, like Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha to sign the letter. On my return to Bombay I not only learnt of Mr. Jinnah's failure to secure the signatures of these gentlemen but likewise that some of the prominent Mussulmans who had signed had withdrawn their signatures and also of the growth among Bombay Moslems of a sentiment very adverse to the holding of the League meeting in Bombay. On 29th April I therefore wrote to you as follows:

My dear Mr. Wazir Hassan,

While I was at Mahableshwar last week Mr. Jinnah had forwarded to you a requisition signed by a few leading Bombay Mahommedans suggesting that the Session of the League this year should be held at Bombay. On my return, at the Session here, however, I have met some more of the influential people who have expressed to me their opinion that it will not be desirable

to have the sessions in Bombay if the war is not over before that time in view of the present situation of Turkey, and I write this to you just to tell you that there is such a feeling.

Yours Sincerely
Fazulbhoy Currimboy

For reasons which you do not reveal you omit all mention of that letter in your note, and say you had no inkling of what was happening in Bombay until you received Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha's letter of 25th May. I hope my letter of 29th April did not also miscarry like the other important letter from M. A. Khandwani and others to which you refer on page 9 of your Note. However, my letter was sent, and from your Agenda I find that Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha also wrote to you but about a month after I had written and up to the time of reading your Note I was quite ignorant of the contents of that letter.

From this consideration of the historical aspect of the situation dealt with in your Note, I will now proceed to trace the growth of feeling in Bombay against the proposed Session. Although there is no feeling against the creed and aspirations of the League nevertheless a feeling in Bombay during the year became increasingly opposed to the scheme to which you profess to have found no reasoned objection. At one time there was an apprehension that if it were persisted in to hold the Session in Bombay there might have been a risk of its being broken up by a section of local Mahommedans. There is no denying the fact that there exists among the Mussulmans a certain degree of feeling over this war through the unfortunate participation of Turkey and the best reason of all, in my opinion against holding the Session here was the strong local opposition which had meanwhile manifested itself and reasons connected with the War. Moreover this would not have ensured the League receiving that cordial and unanimous welcome to Bombay coming as they were for the first time to the city. In such circumstances I should have been wanting in my duty if by silence I implied consent to the projected Session in Bombay. Mr. Jinnah in his letter to me of 30th May tells me that he made it quite clear to you that Bombay opinion reserves the liberty of postponing or abandoning the meeting in Bombay if the War made such a step necessary. That proviso gains in importance today as the participation of Bulgaria accentuates the feelings of the Moslems and makes the situation if anything worse than it was in March last. An additional factor in influencing my opinion has been the altered opinion of His Highness the Aga Khan with which you are on your own showing acquainted.

I have attempted in this letter to be brief and have had accordingly to pass over several minor inaccuracies in your letter. Nor do I feel called upon to reply to the doubt burst in the final paragraph of your Note, and which has been echoed with vituperative emphasis by a Bombay daily, beyond

pointing out that in your position as Secretary you should be prepared to consider the point of view of those who differ from you.

To sum up the position I faithfully tried to carry out the arrangement that had been made at Delhi to hold a Session in Bombay, and that after ascertaining the Aga Khan's views, Mr. Jinnah and myself having launched the requisition had been sent up in a high handed manner, some thought that it had been usurped by the promoters of the requisition, some said that their signatures had been obtained on the understanding that the advisability of convening the League in Bombay would be first considered before the requisition was sent off and that they were thus misled. There was a walter of confusion and if it was so then the feeling is much more so now and is shared by some of the leading members of the community reinforced as it is by the weighty opinion of His Highness the Aga Khan as to the critical situation of the War. Again there is the fear though imaginary, lurking in the minds of some Mahommedans that the League will be merged into the Congress and that their interests will thus be sacrificed. The situation if anything is made much wider which for my part I conceive it to be highly impolitic and unstatesmanlike not to bridge over before attempting to cross it.

I have no desire to prolong this controversy and foster unpleasantness and this is the last word on the subject as far as I am concerned. I have done my duty in bringing to the notice of the Council the above facts and it is for the Council to decide upon their course of action. In conclusion I can only assure you that the best interests of my community are at my heart. I have full sympathy with their aspirations and it is needless to say that I am willing and ready always to dedicate my services to the welfare and advancement of my beloved co-religionists.

Yours sincerely,
Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy

P. S.—In all fairness to me I have to request you to place this letter before the Council at their next meeting.

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ENCLOSURE G

In consequence of the difference of opinion which had arisen among the Mahommedans of Bombay in regard to the forthcoming Sessions of the All-India Moslem League at Bombay, His Excellency the Governor was approached with the view of securing His Excellency's advise and sympathy in composing these differences. As a result a conference was held at the Secretariat on the 9th December 1915 at which His Excellency was pleased to preside. The Honourable Sir Ali Imam was also present and assisted with his advice.

The following was agreed to :

The All-India Moslem League to hold its Sessions at Bombay and pass a resolution of loyalty to Government.

The League may also, if it so desires, proceed to appoint a Committee which shall have power to confer with such political and other organisations as they may deem fit with a view to framing a scheme of reform having due regard for the needs of Mahommedans. The report of the Committee to be presented at the next annual session of the All-India Moslem League.

The League to pass a resolution praying His Majesty's Government to extend the term of office of His Excellency Lord Hardinge.

Faiz Tyabji, Barrister-at-Law. Sulemen Abdul Wahid.
Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy, Kt. Suleman Cassum Mitha.
Sheriff Devji Kanji. Rafiuddin Ahmed.
Muhammad Daim Hakim Abdullah Shah, J. P.
M.A. Jinnah, Barrister-at-Law.

ENCLOSURE H

Bombay, the 18th December 1915

The next meeting of the Council of the All-India Moslem League will be held at its office in Bombay, on the 27th December 1915, at 6 P. M.

Members are cordially invited to attend or to send their written opinions.

AGENDA

BUSINESS

To consider the following resolutions for being placed before the annual meeting of the League for adoption :

I. The All-India Moslem League notes with deep satisfaction the steadfast loyalty of the Mussulman community to the British Crown during the present severe crisis through which the Empire is passing; it assures the Government of India, and prays that the assurance may be conveyed to His Majesty the King Emperor, that the Government may continue to rely upon the loyal adhesion to, and support of the Imperial cause by the Mussulmans of India.

II. The All-India Moslem League resolves that a Committee consisting of the following gentlemen be appointed to formulate and frame a scheme of reforms having in view, amongst others, the following matters :

(*a*) The attainment of self-government within the Empire for India as laid down in the constitution of the League.

(*b*) That the Government and the system of administration of the country be further reformed and liberalized.

(*c*) That the elected element of the Legislative Councils in India should substantially and further enlarged.

(*d*) That such Councils should have power to exercise effective control

over the executive.

(*e*) That 'Provincial Autonomy' should be granted to all the Provinces of India; and that the said Committee is authorized to confer with political and other organisations or committees, if any, appointed by any such organisation as they may deem fit, provided always, that due regard is paid to the needs and interests of the Mussulmans of India in the formulation of the aforesaid scheme of reforms.

The Committee shall submit its report and scheme to the Council of the All-India Moslem League to be presented to the League at its next annual Sessions.

III. That the All-India Moslem League, once again, records its deliberate opinion that in the interests of the Mussulman community it is absolutely necessary that the principle of communal representation be extended to all self-governing public bodies and respectfully urges that provision for the adequate and effective representation of Mussulmans on Municipal and District Boards is a necessary corollary of the application of the principle to the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, and, at the same time, considers it essential to the successful working of those public bodies.

IV. The All-India Moslem League desires once more to place on record its deep and grateful appreciation of the great and valuable services rendered to India by His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge of Penshurt, during the past five years, and the feelings of regret with which it has received the intimation that his term of office is, as at present arranged, to cease in March next. The League, while recognising the arduous character of the strain that has been placed on His Excellency during the past few years, under circumstances which have made his continuance in office an act of high sacrifice, venture nonetheless in view of the affection in which Lord Hardinge is held by the people of India, and the trust that they repose in him, and the important questions which will arise for consideration after the war, to urge upon his Majesty's Government the desirability of asking His Excellency to agree to a further extension of his Viceroyalty, and to Lord Hardinge himself, to agree to such extension.

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ENCLOSURE I

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

In view of the special circumstances in which the next annual session of the All-India Moslem League will be held in Bombay, it is absolutely essential that the resolution No. 2 put forward, in the agenda, dated 18th December 1915, issued from this office for adoption by the meeting of the League should be as follows and not as previously set forth.

Members are, therefore, requested to substitute the following in place of the resolution II the rest of the gentlemen be appointed to formulate and

frame a scheme of reforms and that the said committee is authorised to confer with political and other organisations or committees, if any, appointed by any such organization as they may deem fit, provided always that due regard is paid to the needs and interests of the Mussulmans of India in the formulation of the aforesaid scheme of reforms.

The committee shall submit its report and scheme to the Council of the All-India Moslem League to be presented to the League at its next annual sessions.

(Here follows the rest of names as previously given)

Syed Wazir Hasan
Honorary Secretary,
All India Moslem League.

ENCLOSURE J

TELEGRAM, dated the 31st December 1915

Fears that were entertained in various quarters over present session of All-India Moslem League were partly realised this afternoon when League resumed its adjourned sitting to carry through brief programme before it though what threatened to be very serious disturbances was averted by tact, coolness and great presence of mind displayed on occasion by Mr. Mazharul Haque, President, and by other Bombay Moslem leaders who were in attendance. By two, the time appointed for the meeting almost all members of the League were in their seats but portion reserved for visitors was to a large extend unoccupied. About half an hour before the meeting Mr. Edwards Commissioner of Police, had sent a force of about fifty policemen armed with lathis and were kept in readiness in an enclosure just in front of the pandal while half a dozen European police officers under Superintendent Walker were in the grounds. Later, however, Mr. Edwards, accompanied by three Deputies, also arrived at the spot. Acting Chief Presidency Magistrate, Rao Bahadur C.H. Setalvad, was seen in the company of Commissioner of Police at a later stage. Inside the pandal several C.I.O. Officers both European and Indian, had taken seats as visitors by payment of fees. When the President stepped on dais he was loudly cheered and just then visitors' seats which had been unoccupied were filled by large numbers who came in a body. Business before the meeting was very brief. First resolutions expressed loyalty of Mussulmans and second prayed for extension of Lord Hardinge's Viceroyalty. Next one related to formation of committee on question of self-government. Agenda also contained a resolution urging communal representation on all self-governing public bodies. This seems to have influenced the mind of Mr. Hasrat Mohani of Aligarh, who had before the commencement of the proceedings, given notice of his intention to move an adjournment for, as he said subsequently at a compromise arrived at in the presence of Governor of Bombay,

no other resolution except of loyalty and for the appointment of a committee on the question of self-government and formal matters was to be brought forward. Proceedings commenced by the President declaring that the first resolution on loyalty was to be moved from the Chair. Mr. Mohani therefore raised a point of order and said his motion for adjournment must be discussed first.

President—Please sit down. I have already informed you your motion is out of order. Cries of sit down, Don't dictate Chair. At this stage Maulvi Abdul Rauf, former Secretary of Anjuman-e-Ziaul Islam of Bombay who was occupying a seat among the visitors, rose and shouted demanding that Mr. Mohani should be allowed to speak. He said this was a meeting of Mahommedans and not of Hindus. Then followed a confusion but peace was soon restored and the President appealed to them all to believe that he was not acting in a despotic manner. He said he firmly believed in word of his God. Quoting an Arabic passage, he asked them to put faith in his words if they were Mahommedans. At this another Mahommedan from a visitors' seat got up and said. If you were a Mahommedan you ought to appear like a Mahommedan. Quran asks you to dress like a Mahommedan. You must speak being Mahommedan leader. Wild scene of disorder then ensued when number of men began to shout and became rowdy. While scenes of disorder were going on Abdullah Samad Khan, head of the Pathan community of Bombay, Maulvi Abdul Rauf, and several other Mahommedans followed by Sirdar Saheb Suleman Cassim Haji Mitha, C.I.E. who was in the beginning against the League holding its Session this year but who subsequently was a party to compromise, rushed towards dais and began to speak vehemently. Pathan leader who was infront said he objected to proceedings being conducted in any language but Urdu or Persian. Proceedings of the meeting affected Mahommedans and he wanted to follow what was being said there. There were many present at the meetings who did not know English. How were they to know that nothing against Mahommedan interest was being said. A voice from behind shouted that the President yesterday had spoken of a Hindu Governor of Kabul. Pathan leader was then called upon dais by some Mahommedan leaders and the President shook hands with him. They pacified him and assured him that the remainder of business would be done in Urdu. These leaders also succeeded in restoring order temporarily, decided to allow Mohani to address the meeting.

Speaking in Urdu, Mohani said he belonged to no party and he did not want to say anything against the President. They had arrived at a compromise to pass only three resolutions and they ought to adjourn after passing the self-government resolutions. This was followed again by shouts saying what guarantee there was that very same resolution, terms of which were agreed upon at the compromise meeting, would be moved. Mr. Mitha said he could not yet understand why they should have conducted proceedings in English yesterday ? This was a shame. Yesterday they brought Congress leaders to the meeting and lustily cheered them. They were transacting business in the

name of All-India Moslem League but they were a Congress body. Maulvi Rauf said at all meetings Loyalty resolution was put first; why should they have moved those two condolence resolutions yesterday ? President assured every one that they would not alter the self-government resolution as drafted and settled at the compromise meeting even by one letter. At this, the same man who had taken objection to dress and appearance, said they would not rely on a Kafir Mussulman who did not dress like a Mahommedan and keep his beard. Maulvi Rauf said they had not come there to hear from the President that his word was God's word, Mr. Mitha then became more excited and he said they were merging the League into Congress and were acting as dictated by Congress leaders. They had upset object with which he and other Mahommedan leaders had established the league. They had sunk the League in darkness and wiping it out of existence, were converting it into Congress. Tumultuous and wild scenes continued for some time, rowdies blocking passage and making it impossible for business to continue. Leaders on the dais preserved great coolness and while rowdies were shouting and were getting more and more excited, they, apprehending the worst, managed successfully to send all the ladies away in motor cars through the back entrance. Perceiving it impossible to proceed with business President, after consulting leaders, adjourned the meeting, remarking it was his great misfortune that he had to adopt such a course, but all his Moslem friends believed that this was the wisest course to take under present circumstances. Leaders, retired in the President's room and stayed there for nearly an hour until rowdy element had dispersed. Nothing untoward happened; on the contrary, the President was cheered when he left. Questions whether Sessions will be continued and, if so, when and where and under what restrictions is to be decided shortly for which an informal meeting had to be convened.

ENCLOSURE K

NOTE ON THE DISTURBANCE AT THE SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE

31 December 1915

It will be remembered that from the outset there was considerable opposition on the part of the Bombay Sunni Mahommedans to the holding of a Session of the All-India Moslem League in Bombay during X-mas week, 1915. Mr. Jinnah, who was the chief representative in Bombay of the pro-League party, is not regarded by the Sunnis of Bombay as a Mahommedan and his avowed object in bringing the League to Bombay, viz., to form a political coalition with the Hindu National Congress, in order to present a Joint Hindu-Mussulman demand to the British Government for concessions and self-government, did not command itself to the Sunni Mussulmans of Bombay,

who believe that if such a scheme fructified they will be left in the lurch, all the advantages being swallowed by the Hindus and minor Mussulman sects, like the Khojas who are attracted to the Hindus. They further emphasized their belief that it was perfectly useless to worry the British Government for concessions etc., while war was still being waged, and that, as Sunni Mahommedans bound by deep sentimental ties to the persons of Khalifa, their wisest course would be to remain quiet until peace had been declared, and then submit their claim to recognition, by the British Government. M.A. Jinnah, on the other hand, was equally determined to force the League meeting upon Bombay and to come to some mutual understanding with the Hindus on the subject of self-government, and to aid him in his campaign he gathered round him a handful of Khojas and Bohras, all Shias, and one Sunni Mahommedan of means who acted as member of a Reception Committee and as Secretaries of the local pro-League party.

2. Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy, it may be incidently mentioned, had originally been one of the signatories of the letter inviting the All-India Moslem League to Bombay, but, on finding that opposition to the League's Session was considerable and having been spoken to rather sharply by Sirdar Saheb Sulleman Cassum Haji Mitha on the subject, he, in company with others, withdrew his signature and stated that he did not approve of the League meeting in Bombay. From that day Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy has acted as a human pendulum, being forced this way by one party and now in the opposite direction by the other party, and retiring to bed whenever feeling became acute, or the members of either party became too inopportunate. He put the coping-store on this inglorious career of vacilation by retiring to Calcutta for X-mas week and remaining there till all danger of disturbance had passed away.

The opposition of the local Mahommedans to the League continued and culminated in a monster meeting held on Sandhurst Road, and attended by about 10,000 Mahommedans, at which a resolution was passed protesting against the holding of the Session of the League in Bombay. Haji Yusuf Haji Ismail Sobhani was the President of the meeting and representatives of all sects, including Bohras and a few Khojas*, were present. This meeting may be said to have finally established and clinched the opposition on a firm basis. Mr. Jinnah was alarmed at the turn affairs had taken and wired immediately for Vazir Hassan to come down from Lucknow. At the same time, free use was made of the columns of *The Bombay Chronicle*, a Congress organ, to belittle and irritate the leading men of the anti-League party by pseudonymous communications and violent leading articles. The opposition has been most unfortunate; and it is largely due to its malignancy that the feelings of those opposed to the League Session were roused into irritation and anger. There is little doubt that the articles and pseudonymous letters were issued with the approval of Mr. Jinnah and his following-particularly

* The heads of the local Pathan and Julahai sects were all present in this meeting.

the Adamji Peerbhoy family—and that the Hindu Congress party in Bombay pronounced a tacit benediction upon a campaign which was calculated to rouse to fury those who were in opposition to Mr. Jinnah and the League.

For the time being, however, opposition quieted down. But some of the local Mahommedans (Sunnis) were not wholly pleased with the compromise, and warned Mr. Sulleman Cassum Haji Mitha that if the terms were not strictly adhered to by the opposite side, they would consider it their duty strongly to protest. They were further irritated by the list of members of the Committee (appointed to draft a scheme of reforms in consultation with the Congress) which Mr. Vazir Hassan proceeded after the compromise, to print and circulate. The members whom it was proposed to appoint from the Bombay Presidency were found to consist (with, I believe, a single exception) of Khojas and Bohras, and the Sunni Mussulmans, who had opposed the Session of the League, felt that they had been deliberately boycotted by Messers Jinnah and Vazir Hassan and the Moslem League. Meanwhile *The Bombay Chronicle* continued to publish articles in a strain calculated to irritate the League opponents and thereby nullify the spirit of compromise, which His Excellency had endeavoured to bring about. Rightly or wrongly; the local Mahommedans felt that they had to some extent played into the hands of the League, but, agreeing to a compromise with people, who were apparently not prepared to play straight with them or allow them any voice in matters (such as the reform scheme) which are of vital interest to the Sunnis as well as the Shias. *The Times of India*, in a leading article on 31st December 1915, echoed the feeling of the local Mahommedans in the following words :

> The advisability of holding a Session at the present time, was obviously a question for the Mahommedan community to decide. But there can be no two reasoned opinions as to the procedure adopted. If the League is to be regarded as an organized body, the constituent members of that body cannot be ignored; to invite the League to Bombay, and to ignore the Provincial Branch of that League, was politics pour rire. And whom did the League represent in these conditions? Certainly not the Mahommedans of Bombay. So far as their feeling could be tested by a public meeting it was overwhelmingly opposed to the Session. It is only necessary to glance through the exiguous list of the Reception Committee to drive home the point. It did not represent the Punjab, for that great province was equally opposed to the Session. Else-where, if we are to accept the analysis of the voting, opinion was also divided. So it is not easy to decide in these circumstances precisely what body of Moslem opinion was represented at yesterday's session,' etc. etc.

9. Ultimately, the subject upon which the local Mahommedans definitely decided to protest was the Presidential speech of Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq. It may be mentioned in the first instance that his speech was printed at *The Bombay Chronicle* press, and, instead of being distributed prior to its delivery to members of the League and the public, as is said to be usually the case, it was kept secret and, in fact, was not distributed until after the address had been

delivered on the first day. This, no doubt, was done purposely, in view of the fact that the Presidential speech deliberately transgressed the spirit of the compromise arrived at by dealing with a variety of matters which the Bombay Mussulmans had declared that they would not allow to be mentioned. The speech was in fact a deliberate attempt on the part of Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq to render nugatory the compromise agreed to before His Excellency the Governor, and one part of his speech, dealing with the suppression of seditious Mussulman papers and the detention of Mahommed Ali and Shaukat Ali, was a direct attack upon the action of the Government of India. What the Bombay Mussulmans chiefly objected to was the fact that the speech ran directly counter to the spirit both of their original objections and of the terms of the compromise.

11. By the morning of the 31st, the second days' Session, however, the Presidential speech had appeared in all the vernacular papers and had been eagerly read and discussed. The local Mahommedans declared that the speech was a direct violation of the terms of the compromise, that the Loyalty resolution ought to have been brought forward first, and that Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq had clearly defied their wishes. From that moment there is little doubt that they determined to protest and, if necessary, break up the Session.

13. After all were assembled, the President read the first and second resolution for the day, one after the other, and declared them duly carried.

Before the President called upon Mr. Jinnah to move the third resolution, Maulvi Fazl-ul-Hasan Hasrat Mohani of Aligarh stood up and asked the permission of the President to speak. The President very peremptorily ordered him to sit down. He sat down for a second and then stood up again with some request. The President again ordered him to sit down. This aroused the indignation of some other Mahommedans, who arose and told the President that he should be allowed to speak, as it was a public meeting of Mahommedans, where Mahommedans particularly had a right to speak.

They also wanted to know why the proceedings were conducted in English and not in Urdu, which would have been understood by all and have given them an opportunity to reply. Here Sirdar Sulleman Cassum Mitha came into the pandal; and on hearing what had happened, supported the opposition, saying that it could not be called an All-India Moslem League meeting as it was entirely conducted by Shias and no Sunni had any voice in it, and that the Congressmen had joined and supported it. He also said something about separate election which could not be heard owing to the confusion. It was also said that the prime movers of the League had not adhered to their promise which brought about the compromise and had exceeded the limits laid of all. The opposers further said that they had not understood fully what the President had spoken yesterday but they had now read the whole thing in the papers and had discovered the League in its true colours.

Again, some few minutes later, while people were still standing about in groups and talking quietly Mr Jinnah came out and asked me to assist the

League to continue its Session in the pandal by driving out and keeping out the general public. He claimed that the pandal was a 'private place', whereas it was obviously a 'public place', and stated that if the police would keep the public out he would refund the money paid by the public for tickets of admission. I pointed out to Mr. Jinnah that if the police did this they would be taking sides with Mr. Jinnah and his party against the other party, whereas the sole duty of the police was (*a*) to control traffic and (*b*) to put down serious and violent disorder, which not in my opinion occurred. I told him that the police could not take sides in the manner he proposed. When he said that they proposed to go on with the League Session in the pandal, confining the audience to members of the League, I replied that I advised him not to hold the Session (i.e., in that place and at that time); and I said this because it appeared to me that to hold the Session in these circumstances would practically amount to an invitation to the opposing party to create a further and perhaps more serious disturbance. I am perfectly certain that I was right in my contentions, viz., (*a*), that, unless physical violence and rioting broke out, the police had no right to interfere in the internal business of the meeting; (*b*) that the police had no right to keep the public out, particularly as they had been invited by hand bills*; and advertisements to attend the Presidents' arrival and pay for admission to the Session; and (*c*) that to have attempted to continue the Session that afternoon in the pandal, after it had once been broken up and adjourned, would have certainly led to further disturbances, perhaps of a more violent character. Mr. Jinnah's report of his interview with me, which appeared in the Press, gives an entirely erroneous impression of my attitude in the matter and of the position to which I adhered. This, I believe, he has purposely done in order to bring me into disrepute, as he persists in believing, that I was responsible for the disturbance, where actually it was commenced by a member of the League itself of Aligarh and was carried on by the Bombay Mahommedans who had been irritated for weeks by Mr. Jinnah's tactics and by abuse levelled at them in the Press and had been finally incensed by Mazhar-ul-Haq's patent disregard for the spirit of the compromise effected by His Excellency the Governor.

15. In view of the above facts, I think it would be desirable for Government to issue early a Press Note on the subject, particularly as Mr. Jinnah and his local supporters are considering in what way they can best get me into trouble, for what is supposed to have been my complicity in the plot to wreck the Session of the All-India Moslem League.

* These hand bills, which invited people to come and see 'Maulvi Mazhar-ul-Haqq', were directly responsible for the presence of more than one Pathan at the pandal they believeing that Mazhar-ul-Haqq must be some very learned exponent of Islamic teaching. It was a shock to them to find a clean shaven person dressed in European garb instead of a beared and reverened signor.

In order to get Muhammedan to attend, the League issued a considerable number of free tickets to the public.

16. I append a cutting from *The Advocate of India,* which, to some extent, corroborates my view as to the reasons for the actual disturbance.

Source : Government of India—Home Department Political-Deposit Proceedings—January 1916—No. 66.

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LETTERS FROM SIR ALI IMAM TO HARDINGE

I

1 February 1916

...as an Indian I cannot help thinking that the Prime Minister of England and his colleagues do not understand anything of or about India, for they would not have acted as they have done if they did. This sort of treatment of India leaves me under a great sense of depression, and I begin to doubt whether I, with the rest of the moderates out there have not, after all, been ploughing the sand.

II

10 February 1916

It seems to me that the device here to do something for India after the war is not strong enough to result in anything substantial. The more I talk with men in authority here, the more I feel that they are trying to discover something to please the people of India for the time being without giving them any real voice or authority in the affairs of their country. I have done no more than pressed the reforms urged by you in your memorandum. If all that Your Excellency has asked for is given, things will be satisfactory, but I am afraid even this little is grudged. I feel very anxious.

III

28 September 1916

I had a further talk with Mr. Chamberlain...I have been pressing upon him the absolute importance of accepting your 'memorandum' in full without any reservation. He has asked me to see him again day after tomorrow to discuss how far it will be desirable to announce during the pending of the war the intention of the Government to deal with India generously, I personally think that, if definite reforms cannot be announced at present, some fare

shadowing of them is necessary, for people in India are getting very distrustful.... It seems to me that Mr. Chamberlain understands the situation very well, but hesitates—no doubt because of his advisers who are mostly reactionaries.

IV

2 March 1916

I struck the note on the line of your memorandum. He is very sympathetic and Lord Bryce, though some what reticent, was not discouraging.... He is well disposed towards India and Indians. The main difficulty seems to be that there is no one here to speak for my poor country.

I had another long interview with Mr. Chamberlain. He is very undecided in his mind. He was good to me and gave me repeated hearings ...but I doubt very much whether he will act on his own judgement for he knows very little of India, as he himself told me.

Source: Hardinge's Papers. Correspondence with person in England, May 1915—March 1916, Vol. III.

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THE NINTH SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE, 1916

[The Hon. Mr. M. A. Jinnah presided over the Lucknow session of the All-India Muslim League held in December, 1916. It was here in this historic session that an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League was arrived at, commonly known as 'Lucknow Pact'. In his Presidential Address, he discussed almost every aspect of Indian politics—the war and the problems of reconstruction after the war, internal situation in India, official attitude towards Indian aspirations, Hindu-Muslim relations, Scheme of Reforms, position of India in the Empire and the question of Caliphate.]

Ladies and Gentlemen ! No mere conventional words are needed on my part to express my deep thanks for the great privilege you have conferred on me by selecting me as President of the Ninth Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League. The honour is the highest in the gifts of the Muslim community, to which those alone may aspire, who have given freely of their thought and time to the service of the communal cause. I am fully

sensible of how little I have done to deserve such distinction, nor could I have the presumption to desire it with such a clear sense of my own unworthiness. This choice, however, has come to me in the nature of a mandate from my community and in such cases individual considerations cannot and must not stand in the way of the larger Will. I accept the great and heavy responsibilities of the position only in the belief that I can unreservedly count on your sympathy, zeal and ready co-operation in the great task that lies before us.

As President of the Bombay Presidency Provincial Conference, which was held at Ahmedabad only a few weeks ago. I have had to make a pronouncement, but at the time I accepted the honour of presiding over the Conference, I did not know that I should have this unique honour and responsibility of expressing my views as your President again within so short a time. Much of the ground was covered by me in that speech of mine. I do not now wish to repeat what I said then, nor do I wish to deal with many great and burning questions and problems that affect India in its internal administration. They will, no doubt, be placed before you in the form of resolutions which will be submitted by the speakers in charge of them for your deliberation and consideration. At the present moment, the attention of the country at large is entirely concentrated and solely revetted on the War and what will happen after the War. I have, therefore, decided mainly to deal with the situation in my Presidential address on those lines, and I will endeavour to place before you my humble views for your considerations, at the same time hoping and trusting that my feeble voice may reach those who hold the destinies of India in their hands.

ANNUAL STOCK-TAKING

In this great annual meeting of representative Mussulmans from all parts of India, who have come to deliberate and take counsel together on the large and important issues that govern our destiny in this land, it will not be out of place to take a wide survey of the conditions in which our lot is cast. This is primarily the time for annual stock-taking, for testing our position in the light of the experience of the past year, for an intelligent preparation of ways and means for meeting the demands of the future, and, above all, for refreshing, so to speak, the ideals that feed the springs of our faith, hope and endeavour. This I take to be the fundamental object for which the annual sessions of political bodies, like the All-India Muslim League, are held. The circumstances, however, in which we meet today, are exceptional and mark a new epoch in the history of our country. All that is great and inspiring in the common affairs of men, for which the noblest and most valiant of mankind have lived and wrought and suffered in all ages and all climes, is now moving India out of its depths. The whole country is awakening to the call of its destiny and is scanning the new horizons with

eager hope. A new spirit of earnestness, confidence and resolution is abroad in the land. In all directions are visible the stirrings of a new life. The Mussulmans of India would be false to themselves and the traditions of their past, had they not shared to the full the new hope that is moving India's patriotic sons today, or had they failed to respond to the call of their country. Their gaze, like that of their Hindu fellow-countrymen, is fixed on the future.

But gentlemen of the All-India Muslim League, remember that the gaze of your community and of the whole country is at this moment fixed on you. The decisions that you may take in this historic Hall, and at this historic Session of the League, will go forth with all the force and weight that can legitimately be claimed by the chosen leaders and representatives of 70 millions of Indian Mussulmans. On the nature of those decisions will depend in a large measure the fate of India's future - of India's unity and of our common ideals and aspirations for constitutional freedom. The moment for decision has arrived. The alternatives are clear and unmistakable. The choice lies in our hands.

THE WAR

The future historians, while chronicling the cataclysms and convulsions of these times, will not fail to note the conjunction of events of boundless influence and scope that have made the fortunes of India so largely depend on the united will and effort of this generation. These events have, of course, flowed from the world-shaking crisis into which Europe was plunged in August, 1914. What this dark period has meant in accumulated agony, suffering, destruction and loss to mankind, is beyond any standard of computation known to history. With the unfolding of this appalling tragedy have emerged into light, stark, elemental forces of savagery that lay behind a bright and glittering mask of 'Kultur', which threaten to sweep away the very foundations of civilized life and society. The issues which are in death grips on the battle-fields of three continents, go to the roots of the principles on which the fabric of modern civilization has been reared by the energy and toil of countless generations. Freedom, justice, right and public law are pitted against despotism, aggression, anarchy and brute force and the result of this deadly combat will decide the future of mankind whether the end will come with a stricken and shattered world, lying bleeding and helpless under the iron heel of the tyrant, with the whole of humanity stripped bare of its hope and faith and reduced to bondage, or whether the hideous nightmare will pass away and the world, redeemed by the blood of the heroic defenders of civilization and freedom, regain its heritage of peace and enter a period of vaster and more glorious synthesis and reconstruction.

These are tremendous issues and the blood of every Indian with his usual gift of quick moral perception is stirred by the feeling that he is a

citizen of an empire which has staked its all in a supreme endeavour to vindicate the cause of freedom and of right. What India has given in this fellowship of service and sacrifice has been a free and spontaneous tribute to the ideals of the great British nation, as well as necessary contribution to the strength of the fighting forces of civilization, which are so valiantly rolling back the tides of scientifically organised barbarism. In this willing service of the people of India, there has been no distinction of class or creed. It has come from every part of the land and from every community with equal readiness and devotion. In this service, there has been no cold, calculating instinct at work. It has sprung from a clear, compelling sense of duty and moral sympathy and not from any commercial desire to make a safe political investment. 'India's loyalty to the Empire has *set no price on itself.*

RECONSTRUCTION

After such colossal upheavals as this War, the world cannot quietly slip back into its old grooves of life and thought. Much of what the existing generations have known in social and political arrangements is visibly passing away under a deluge of blood and fire. The thick crust of materialism and pampered ease, the inertia of habit, the cramping weight of convention and of institutions that have outlived their use, have fallen off from the lives of the great Western Democracies under the stress of this great struggle for their existence. They have been thrown back on themselves. In the hot furnace of elemental passions, the trifles, are being burnt to ashes, the gold is being made pure of dross, and when the terrible ordeal has passed, the liberated soul will feel almost primeval ease and power to plan, to build and to create afresh ampler and freer conditions of life for the future. The range of choice would be unlimited and the need for bold constructive efforts in various directions vital and urgent. Europe after the War will call for a statesmanship of a new order to undertake the gigantic tasks of peace. The greatest victory for freedom will have to be conserved. Free nations will have to learn to live freely and intensely. Freedom itself will have to be organised, its bounds made vaster and its powers of self-preservation strengthened and increased.

THE INDIAN PROBLEM

These tasks have peculiar urgency and significance in the case of the vast and various communities comprising the British Empire. And among the complex series of problems relating to the Imperial reconstruction awaiting British statesmanship, none is of more anxious moment than the problem of reconstruction in India. I need not set about to discuss in detail the Indian problem in all its bearings. It has been discussed threadbare by all manner of men from every conceivable angle of vision. However, there

are two cardinal facts about the Indian situation which practical statesmanship will have to take into account while addressing itself to the study of the problem and its adequate solution. There is, first, the great fact of the British Rule in India with its Western character and standards of administration, which while retaining absolute power of initiative, direction and decision, has maintained for many decades unbroken peace and order in the land, administered even-handed justice, brought the Indian mind, through a widespread system of Western education, into contact with the thought and ideals of the West and thus led to the birth of a great and living movement for the intellectual and moral regeneration of the people. Here I may quote from the speech of H. E. Lord Chelmsford delivered in Calcutta the other day : 'The growing self-respect and self-consciousness of her (India's) people are plants that we ourselves have watered.' Secondly, there is the fact of the existence of a powerful, unifying process—the most vital and interesting result is creating out of the diverse mass of race and creed a new India fast growing to unity of thought, purpose and outlook, responsive to new appeals of territorial patriotism and nationality, stirring with new energy and aspiration and becoming daily more purposeful and eager to recover its birthright to direct its own affairs and govern itself. To put it briefly, we have a powerful and efficient Bureaucracy of British officers responsible only to the British Parliament, governing, with methods known as benevolent despotism, a people that have grown fully conscious of their destiny and are peacefully struggling for political freedom. This is the Indian problem in a nutshell. The task of British statesmanship is to find a prompt, peaceful, and enduring solution of this problem.

If it were possible to isolate the tangled group of social and political phenomena and subject it to a thorough investigation by reason unalloyed by sentiment, it would be infinitely easier to find a safe and sure path for Indian political development and advance. But, as you know pure unalloyed reason is not the chief motive power in human things. In the affairs of our common secular existence, we have to deal not with angels, but with men, with passions, prejudices, personal idiosyncrasies, innumerable cross-currents of motive, of desire, hope, fear and hate. The Indian problem has all such formidable complications in its texture. We have, for instance, the large and trained body of English officials who carry on the administration of the country and exercise power over the well-being and happiness of the teeming millions of this land. They are most of them hard-working efficient and conscientious public servants, and yet they are beset by the prejudices and limitations that mark them as a class apart. They are naturally conservative, have a rooted horror of bold administrative changes or constitutional experiments, are reluctant to part with power or associate Indians freely in the government of the country. Their main concern appears to be to work the machine smoothly, content to go through their common round from day to day, and they feel bored and worried and upset by the loud, confident and

unsetting accents of New India. All this is eminently human, but it also means an enormous aggravation of the difficulties in the path of final settlement. It means in actual experience the growth of a tremendous class-interest, the interest of the government class as distinct from, if not wholly opposed to, the interest of the governed. It is, in fact, the existence of this vast, powerful and by no means silent 'interest' that explains the origin and wide currency of certain shallow, bastard and desperate political maxims, which are flung into the fact of Indian patriots at the least provocation. They are familiar enough to all students of Indian affairs. As a sample, we may take the following :

(1) Democratic institutions cannot thrive in the environment of the East. (Why ? Were democratic institutions unknown to the Hindus and Mahommedans in the past ? What was the village Panchayat ? What are the history, the traditions, the literature and the precepts of Islam ? There are no people in the world who are more democratic even in their religion than the Mussulmans.)

(2) The only form of government suitable to India is autocracy, tempered by English (European) efficiency and character. (All nations have had to go through the experience of despotic or autocratic government at one time or the other in the history of the world. Russia was liberated to a certain extent only a few years ago. France and England had to struggle before they conquered the autocracy. Is India to remain under the heel of a novel form of autocracy in the shape of bureaucracy for all time to come, when Japan and even China have set up constitutional Governments on the democratic lines of Great Britain and America ?)

(3) (*a*) The interests of the educated classes are opposed to those of the Indian masses, and (*b*) The former would oppress the latter if the strong protecting hands of the British officials were withdrawn. (This astonishing proposition beats all reason and sense. It is suggested that we who are the very kith and kin of the masses, most of us springing from the middle classes, are likely to oppress the people if more power is conferred that the masses require protection at the hands of the English Officials between whom and the people there is nothing in common, that our interests are opposed to those of the masses—in what respect, it is never pointed out and that, therefore, the monopoly of the administrative control should continue in the hands of non-Indian officials. This insidious suggestion, which is so flippantly made, is intended to secure the longest possible lease for the bureaucracy and to enjoy their monopoly. But it can neither stand the light of facts, nor the analysis of truth. One has only to look at the past records of the Congress for more than a quarter of a century and of the All-India Muslim League to dismiss this spacious plea. The educated people of this country have shown greater anxiety and solicitude for the welfare and advancement of the masses than for any other question during the last quarter of a century.)

(4) Indians are unfit to govern themselves. (With this last question,

I propose to deal later in my speech.)

These are a few of the baseless and silly generalities in which the advocates of the existing methods of Indian governance indulge freely and provocatively when the least menace arises to the monopoly of the bureaucratic authority and power.

INTERNAL SITUATION

Again, if we turn to the internal situation in India, we meet with a set of social, ethnological and cultural conditions unparalleled in recorded history. We have a vast continent inhabited by 315 millions of people sprung from various racial stocks, inheriting various cultures and professing a variety of religious creeds. This stupendous human group, thrown together under one physical and political environment, is still in various stages of intellectual and moral growth. All this means a great diversity of outlook, purpose and endeavour. Every Indian Nationalist who has given close and anxious thought to the problem of nation-building in India, fully realises the magnitude of his task. He is not afraid of admitting frankly that difficulties exist in his path. Such difficulties have no terrors for him. They are already vanishing before the forces which are developing in the New Spirit.

INDIA FOR THE INDIANS

Well, these are the broad aspects of the Indian problem and they will give you a fairly general idea of the obstacles that stand in the way of a full and speedy realisation of the ideals of Indian patriots. We have a powerfully organised body of conservative 'Interest' on the one hand, and a lack of complete organisation of the national will and intelligence on the other. There is, however, one fundamental fact, that stands out clear and unmistakable, which no sophistry of argument and no pseudo-scientific theories about colour and race can disguise. Amid the clash of warring interests and the noise of foolish catchwords, no cool-headed student of Indian affairs can lose sight of the great obvious truism that India is in the first and the last resort for the Indians. Be the time near or distant, the Indian people are bound to attain to their full stature as a self-governing nation. No force in the world can rob them of their destiny and thwart the purposes of Providence. British statesmanship has not become bankrupt or utterly bereft of its faculty of clear political perception, and it is, therefore, bound to recognise that the working of the law of national development in India, which came to birth with the British Rule itself, and is daily gathering momentum under the pressure of the world-forces of freedom and progress, must sooner or later produce a change in the principles and methods of Indian governance. It is inevitable. Then why fight against it, why ignore it, why should not rather there be honest, straightfor-

ward efforts to clear the way of doubts, suspicions and senseless antagonisms to that glorious consumation? Leaving aside hair-brained twaddle of the tribe of scientific peddlers who love to sit in judgment on the East and ape political philosophy, no man with least pretensions to common-sense, can affect to maintain that the Indian humanity is stamped with a ruthless psychology and cramped for ever within the prison of its skull. If the Indians are not the Pariahs of Nature, if they are not out of the pale or operation of the laws that govern mankind elsewhere, if their minds can grow in knowledge and power and can think and plan and organise together for common needs of the present and for common hopes of the future, then the only future for them is self-government *i.e.*, the attaintment of the power to apply through properly organised channels the common national will and intelligence to the needs and tasks of their national existence. The cant of unfitness must die. The laws of Nature and the doctrines of common humanity are not different in the East.

OFFICIAL ATTITUDE

It is a great relief to think that some of the responsible British statesmen have definitely pronounced in recent years that India's ambition to attain self-Government is neither a catastrophe nor a sin. Indeed, that great and sympathetic Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, whose memory will always be cherished with affection by the people of this country, for the first time recognised the legitimacy of that vital Indian aspiration. Other indications have not been wanting of late, which go to show that our national dream and purpose is gaining the stamp of even official approval. There is, however, a world of difference between a theoretical approval of an ideal and its practical application. The supreme duty of the men that lead the forces of Indian progress is to insist that India's rulers should definitely set the ideal before them as the ultimate goal to be attained within reasonable time and should accelerate the pace accordingly. All our difficulties now arise from the steady reluctance on the part of Indian officialdom to keep this end definitely in view and move faster. Mere sympathy divorced from resolute and active progressive policy can hardly ameliorate the situation. Honeyed words alone cannot suffice. We may congratulate each other about a changed 'angle of vision' and yet remain where we are till doomsday. The time for definite decision and a bold move forward has arrived. The vital question today is : Is India fit to be free and to what extent? There can be no shelving of the issue at this juncture. It must be settled one way or the other. If she is not fit today, she has got to be made fit for self-Government. This, I maintain, is no less a duty and responsibility of the Government than the people themselves.

TEST OF FITNESS

Is India fit for freedom ? We, who are present here today, know fully well that from the Indian standpoint there can be but one answer. Our critics would probably challenge our conviction. Our only reply to them would be to go forward and put the matter to the proof. After all, what is the test of fitness ? If we turn to history, we find that in the past only such people have been declared to have been fit for freedom who fought for it and attained it. We are living in different times. Peace has its victories. We are fighting and can only fight constitutional battles. This peaceful struggle is not and will not be wanting in the quality of vigour and sacrifice, and we are determined to convince the British Empire that we are fit for the place of a partner within the Empire, and nothing less will satisfy India.

MOVEMENT FOR UNITY

But apart from the numerous other considerations that have repeatedly been urged in support of the claims of India to responsible and representative form of Government, the one that has grown to be of infinitely larger weight and urgency is the living and vigorous spirit of patriotism and national self-consciousness which is chafing under irksome restraints and is seeking wider and legitimate outlets for service and self-expression. The strength and volume of this spirit, this pent-up altruistic feeling an energy of youth, can be easily realised by those who have their finger on the pulse of the country. The most significant and hopeful aspect of this spirit is that it has taken its rise from a new-born movement in the direction of national unity which has brought Hindus and Mussulmans together involving and brotherly service for the common cause. Bombay had the good fortune to see the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League meet for the first time in the same city last December. These simultaneous Sessions were brought about with no little labour, anxiety and trouble. I do not wish to go into past controversy, but I venture to say that the Session of the All-India Muslim League at Bombay will go down to posterity as peculiarly interesting in its results. The so-called opponents of ours, although for the time being they caused the utmost anxiety and individual risks —which, after all, do not count in a national movement, have, I cannot help saying, rendered the greatest service to our cause. The unjust attitude served only to stiffen the back of the community. The League rose Phoenix like, stronger, more solidified and determined in its ideals and aspirations, with added strength of resolution in carrying out its programme. And today your historic City of Lucknow, the centre of Mussulman culture and intellect, where three years ago the All-India Muslim League laid down our cherished ideal of self-Government under the 'aegis' of the British Crown, is witnessing the simultaneous Sessions of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League once more. Indeed, the person

who fails to read in the Hindu-Muslim rapproachement within the last few years the first great sign of the birth of united India has little knowledge of the political conditions of a few years ago and has no business to talk of India's future.

IDEALS OF THE LEAGUE

I need hardly say that the Hindu-Muslim question had hitherto laid as a colossal riddle athwart the numerous unifying forces that make for the evolution of a common Indian Nationality. The new temper that we witness today is the measure of the change that has happily come over Hindu-Muslim relations. What this change really signifies can only be judged by a reference to the state of things that obtained only a few years ago, when mutual distrust and suspicion were rampant and communal bigots on either side ruled the roost. Everyone of us can easily recall the frame of Muslim mind and feeling in which the All-India Muslim League was founded at Dacca. To put it frankly, the All-India Muslim League came into existence as an organisation with the main object of safe-guarding Muslim interests, Mussulmans, as a community, had till then abstained from all manners of political agitation and they were naturally moved by the loud and insistent demand for constitutional and administrative reforms which Hindu politicians were pressing on the Indian Government. They felt and rightly the need of organising themselves for political action, lest the impending changes initiated by a liberal Secretary of State should swamp them altogether as a community. This was perhaps the only course open to a community proud of the traditions of its past, yet weak in numbers and lacking the strength that organised political activity alone can give. The main principle on which the first All-India Muslim political organization was based, was the retention of Muslim communal individuality strong and unimpaired in any constitutional readjustment that might be made in India in the course of its political evolution. The creed has grown and broadened with the growth of political life and thought in the community. In its general outlook and ideal as regards the future, the All-India Muslim League stands abreast with the Indian National Congress and is ready to participate in any patriotic efforts for the advancement of the country as a whole. In fact, this readiness of the educated Muslims, only about a decade after they first entered the field of politics, to work shoulder to shoulder with the other Indian communities for the common good of all, is to my mind the strongest proof of the value and need of the separate Muslim political organisation at present. I have been a staunch Congressman throughout my public life and have been no lover of sectarian cries, but it appears to me that the reproach of 'separatism' sometimes levelled at Mussulmans, is singularly inapt and wide of the mark, when I see this great communal organisation rapidly growing into a powerful factor for the birth of United India. A minority must, above everything else, have a complete sense of security before its broader political sense can be evoked for co-operation and united endeavour

in the national tasks. To the Mussulmans of India that security can only come through adequate and effective safeguards as regards their political existence as a community. Whatever my individual opinion may be, I am here to interpret and express the sense of the overwhelming body of Muslim opinion, of which the All-India Muslim League is the political organ.

HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS

It is a matter of infinite gratification to me as well as to all patriotic Mussulmans that the Muslim communal position in this matter has been recognised and met in an ungrudging spirit by the leader of the great Hindu community. This was so amply demonstrated by the happy and unanimous decision that was arrived at by the Committees of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League that they met at Calcutta only last November. Our joint Conferences in Lucknow were marked by honest efforts on either side to find a lasting solution of our differences, and I rejoice to think that a final settlement has at last been reached which sets the seal on Hindu-Muslim co-operation and opens a new era in the history of our country. A few irreconcilable spirits in either camp may still exist here and there, but the atmosphere has on the whole been rid of the menace of sectarian thunder and the prospects of the future are bright with a promise that gladdens the hearts of India's devoted sons. Just as I have no sympathy with a member of my community who even with an assured communal existence would not extend the hand of fellowship to his Hindu brother, so I cannot appreciate the attitude of the Hindu patriot who would insist on his pound of flesh, though, in this struggle, the entire future of the country for the sake of a small gain to one side or the other may be marred for ever. As an instance, I would like to point out the recent unfortunate controversy that was raised in these Provinces over the passing of the Municipal Act. But surely, we are not wanting in political wisdom and sagacity. Let us remember, whether Hindus or Mussulmans, that new India wants a wholly different type of public worker, of more generous spirit and ampler mould, free from the egoism of sect and the narrowness of bigotry, one who can resist the temptation to crush the weak and yet would not quail before the aggression of the strong, who can rise above the petty preoccupations of the day to the higher plane of devotion and service which alone can give to a people, faith, hope, freedom and power.

SCHEME OF REFORMS

With the satisfactory solution of the most formidable problem that stood in the path of Indian progress towards political co-operation and unity, our constitutional battle may be said to have been halfwon already. The united Indian demand, based on the actual needs of the country and framed with due regard to time and circumstances, must eventually prove irresistible. It must

also be recognised that those responsible for the Government of India have already shown a disposition to treat the existing grievances of the people in a broader spirit of understanding and sympathy. With the restoration of peace, the Indian problem will have to be dealt with on bold and generous lines and India will have to be granted her birth-right as a free, responsible and equal member of the British Empire. How this change is to be effected and what are to be the lines of development and methods of solution are matters that have been fully occupying the thought of Indian publicists for the past two years and authoritative schemes of readjustment have already been formulated and placed before the Government by the nineteen elected representatives of the Imperial Council. You are aware that a committee of the All-India Muslim League was formed last year and was authorised to draw up a scheme of reform in consultation with the Committee of the Indian National Congress. That scheme is ready and will, at this Session, be submitted to you for your consideration and judgment.

A NEW BILL

After you have adopted the scheme of reforms you should see that the Congress and the League take concerted measures to have a Bill drafted by constitutional lawyers as an amending Bill to the Government of India Act which embodies the present constitution of our country. This Bili when ready should be adopted by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League and a deputation of leading and representative men from both the bodies should be appointed to see that the Bill is introduced into the British Parliament and adopted. For that purpose, we should raise as large a fund as possible to supply the sinews of war until our aim and object are fulfilled.

POSITION OF INDIA IN THE EMPIRE

The first and the foremost question that requires to be put at rest, is that the position of India in the Empire should be defined in the most unequivocal terms. It should be made clear by the Government in an authoritative manner that self-Government is not a mere distant goal that may be attained at some future indefinite time, but that self-Government for India is the definite aim and object of the Government to be given to the people within a reasonable time. That should be the aim and object of the reconstruction and reformation of the present constitution of the Government of India and immediate steps should be taken after the War to introduce the reforms towards that end in view, both by the Government and the people.

IMPERIAL PARTNERSHIP

Reading the signs of the times, it appears that the claims of the overseas

Dominions, such as Canada, Australia and even South Africa, viz., to allow them a voice in the declaration of war and the making of peace and the Imperial Foreign policy if they are to bear the responsibilities of the Empire, cannot well be resisted, and it might follow that an Imperial Parliament may be constructed and established, England, Scotland and Ireland having their separate parliaments for the purpose of managing their internal and domestic affairs, such as the Dominions already have. Sir Joseph Ward, addressing the meeting of the Insurance Institute at Gresham College only last month said that 'in the future reconstruction of the Empire, there could not be any interference with local authority and, though an Imperial Parliament was a long way off, they might now work for some effective Imperial Council and that before an organic Parliament was possible, there must be devolution in Britain to pave the way for a federal legislature overseas. The Dominions had no right even to minority voice as to whether the nation should go to war or what the peace terms should be'. He quoted Mr. Asquith's speech at the 1911 Imperial Conference in which the Prime Minister stated that 'an Imperial Parliament scheme would impair the authority of the British Parliament.' 'Since then', Sir Joseph said, 'there had been a great evolution of opinion on the subject. Mr. Bonar Law had declared, as a result of the war, the time was coming when the overseas Dominions would share in the Government of the Empire with Britain. He hoped that before the War ended some *modus vivendi* would be established.' In the political reconstruction, India, the largest part of the Empire, cannot possibly be allowed to continue a dependency as an adjunct to England, Scotland or Ireland or to be ruled and governed by the Dominions. Hitherto the responsibility, the control and the supervision of India has been vested in Great Britain. The question naturally arises what will be the position of India if an Imperial Parliament with full representation of the Dominions is constituted? Is India to have new and additional masters? Is India to be ruled jointly by England, Scotland, Ireland and the Dominions? Are we to be handed over to this Imperial Parliament and to be thus ruled and to be governed by the Colonies ? Are we not to have a status or *locus standi* in this Imperial Parliament? I feel sure that I am expressing the opinion of the entire educated people of this country that India will never allow herself to be relegated to such an intolerable position. Indeed, she does not want a change of masters nor additional masters. If an Imperial Parliament, such as indicated above, is established, India's right should be recognised and her voice in that Imperial Parliament most be fully and properly secured and represented by her own sons in the Councils of the Empire.

MINIMUM DEMANDS

Next, it is well-known that the reforms that are sought by the people of India to be introduced in the constitutional Government of India, were fully adumbrated recently by the 19 elected members of the Imperial Legislative

Council and I do not wish to repeat them here, as I believe you are all familiar with them already. I was one of the signatories and I would urge upon you to follow them substantially so far as fundamental principles are involved in those proposals. Those demands were formulated by responsible men who owe duty to the Government and the people alike as 'chosen representatives' not in a spirit of bargaining. Those demands are the minimum in the strictest sense of the word. It is said that these are extravagant demands. It is said that it is a big thing. It is said that we are not yet ready for them. It is said that if these reforms are introduced, there will be chaos, and particularly the Anglo-Indian Press is not only most unreasonable and disappointing, but alarmed. These are mere destructive methods. Similar fears were raised and arguments advanced when the Minto-Morley Reforms were on the Legislative anvil. But what is the verdict now, official and non-official, after nearly seven years of actual trial? Need I give the answer? We have not been favoured either by our critics or by the Government as to what is the alternative scheme. We are not taken into the confidence of the secret chambers of the Government where the Government of India, it is said, have been deliberating upon and preparing a despatch containing their proposals of reform to be submitted to the Secretary of State for India. In England, the representatives of the Colonies and the Press and the people and the Ministers are freely discussing the reconstruction of the constitution of the Empire after the War, may even before the War is over, it is suggested to set up an Imperial Council, whereas in India, we are denied the opportunity of knowing even what the Government are contemplating. It will be a great misfortune if any decisions are arrived at with regard to the future of India by the Government and the Secretary of State for India without the proposals being published and placed before the country at large for public criticism and opinion. I must earnestly urge upon the Government that before any final decision is arrived at, the proposed reform should be published and the people should be given an opportunity to urge their views, and that they should be taken into their confidence. I feel that if the people are bitterly disappointed at this juncture, it will mean the greatest disaster to the future progress of this country.

QUESTION OF THE CALIPHATE

I should be failing in my duty towards my own people and the Government if I did not, at this crisis, make it clear that of the many delicate questions, there is none that requires a closer attention and study than the question of the Caliphate by the Gevernment and the Ministers of Great Britain. The sentiments and feelings and the religious convictions not only of the Mussulmans of India but of the Mussulmans of the world are not to be lightly treated. The loyalty of the Mussulmans of India to the Government is no small asset. From the very commencement of the great cirsis through which the British Empire has been passing, the allegiance of the Mussulmans

to the Crown and their loyalty to the Government has remained wholehearted and unshaken. May I, therefore, urge that the Government should have regard for their dearest and most sacred religious feelings and under no circumstances interfere with the question of the future of the Caliphate. It should be left entirely to the Mussulmans to acknowledge and accept their own Caliph. I do not desire to dilate on this grave and delicate subject, but much deeper currents underlie this exceptional exhortation of mine, which I have ventured to make both in the interests of the Mussulmans and the Government of Great Britain, than it would be expedient at present to discuss on a public platform. But the Mussulmans may well claim that their feelings and sentiments relating to their most cherished traditions should receive consideration in the general policy of the Empire, particularly when they coincide with the demands of justice, humanity and international obligations.

HOLY PLACES OF ISLAM

As a spokesmen of the Mussulmans of India, I must here acknowledge that the noble assurance of the British Government given to them through H.E. Lord Hardinge, the late Viceroy of India, as regards the Holy Places of Islam, was received by them not only with the utmost satisfaction, but with profound gratitude.

MUSLIM ATTITUDE

I may say a word as to the attitude of the Mussulmans of India towards the Government. Our clear duty is to be loyal and respectful, without stooping to a cringing policy. We want no favours and crave for no partial treatment. That is demoralising to the community and injurious to the State. The Mussulmans must learn have self-respect, what we want is a healthy and fair impetus to be given to our aspirations and ideals as a community and it is the most sacred duty of Government to respond to that claim. Towards the Hindus our attitude should be of good-will and brotherly feelings. Co-operation in the cause of our Motherland should be our guiding principle. India's real progress can only be achieved by a true understanding and harmonious relations between the two great sister communities. With regard to our own affairs, we can depend upon nobody but ourselves. We should infuse greater spirit of solidarity into our society. We should remove the root causes and the evil effects of the process of disintegration. We should maintain a sustained loyalty to and co-operation with each other. We should sink personal differences and subordinate personal ambitions to the well-being of the community. We must recognise that no useful purpose is served in petty disputes and in forming party combinations. We should not lose the sympathy of our well-wishers in India and in England by creating a wrong impression that we as a community, are out only for self-interest and self-gain. We must

show by our words and deeds that we sincerely and earnestly desire a healthy National unity. For the rest, the 70 millions of Mussulmans need not fear.

RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCE

A few days ago I came across a paragraph in the *Bombay Chronicle*, the well-known daily paper of Bombay, with its Editor Mr. B. G. Horniman, a friend of the Mussulmans who has rendered great services to us. It is as follows :

> The following incident, reported by the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* may well be read with profit by those whose perverse imaginations, in spite of proofs to the contrary, always see in the differences of religions in India irremovable bar against placing Indians in high offices of trust and responsibility :

This is how H. H. the Nizam has just disposed of a Hindu-*Mussulman* dispute in his territory. Well, for about a year or so, there sprang a quarrel between the Hindus and the Mussulmans of Warrangal about the building of a mosque in a prominent Hindu locality. In spite of many protests from the Hindu population, the other party persisted on constructing one. The Hindus then appealed to His Highness with the result that he was pleased to appoint a committee of enquiry consisting of two Mussulmans and one Hindu to report on the matter. The report was in favour of the Hindus and His Highness has been pleased to pass his orders accordingly.

The action taken by H. H. the Nizam, it need hardly be added, was in accordance with the traditional policy always adopted by the rulers of Hyderabad.

Why can't we in British India, the Hindus and the Mussulmans try the methods which prove so successful in the territories of H. H. the Nizam, to settle our differences ?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I cannot do better than quote a passage from the recent speech of the Prime Minister Mr. Lloyd George, every word of which almost literally applies to the conditions in India. Referring to the Irish situation, he said :

> He was convinced now that it was a misunderstanding partly racial, partly religious. It was to the interest of both to have it removed. But there seemed to have been some evil chance that frustrated every effort made for the achievement of better relations. He had tried once but did not succeed. But the fault was not entirely on one side. He had felt the whole time that they were moving in an atmospher of nervous suspicions and distrust, pervasive and universal of everything and everybody. He was drenched with suspicion of Irishmen by Englishmen and of English-

men by Irishmen and, worse and most fatal of all, by the suspicion of Irishmen of Irishmen. It was a quagmire of distrust which clogged the footsteps of progress. That was the real enemy of Ireland. If that could be slain, he believed, it would accomplish an act of reconciliation that would make Ireland greater and Britain greater and would make the United Kingdom and the Empire greater than they ever were before.

The Renaissance of India really lies in our own hands. Let us work and trust in God, so that we may leave a richer heritage to our children than all the gold of the world, viz., Freedom for which no sacrifice is too great.

Source: M. Rafiq Afzal, *Selected Speeches and Statements of Quaid-i-Azam*, 45-46.

Resolutions Passed :

RESOLUTION I

The Raja of Jahangirabad, in moving the adoption of the Scheme, said that it satisfied the minimum demands of India. The time had now come when the two great communities of India should co-operate with each other and actively work to attain the goal in view. They had talked for years, but what they wanted now was active work.

Mr. Sheriff Devji Kanji of Bombay seconded the motion, which was then carried.

RESOLUTION II

Mr. A. Rasul moved the following resolution :

The All-India Muslim League, while adopting the Scheme of Reforms prepared by the Reform Committee of the League and approved by its Council, submits it in conjunction with the Indian National Congress to the Government for its introduction after the war as the first necessary step towards the establishment of complete self-government in India.

He said that he was connected with the Congress for many years, and self-Government or home rule was a subject discussed in many places. Self-Government, as said by the President yesterday, was not unknown in India, and in the very early days of Islam they had had republics. It was no new thing to them; they wanted to manage their affairs and to know their grievances and apply remedies. Foreign rulers who did not understand the language of the people could not appreciate the grievances of the people. Some interested parties said that through self-Government educated Hindus and Mahommedans wanted to drive away the British. The speaker assured the audience that this was far from their intention. It was well-known that England was the most freedom loving country in the world, and it was also well-known that England advocated the cuase of freedom of other nations. When England advocated the cause of the Balkan States, did she think that India was less educated than the Balkan States ? He did not think England

could deny freedom to India. Even Negroes had got self-government. The wording of the present resolution was most moderate, and the reforms prepared by the League and the Congress were only asking for a larger share in the government of their country. It had been said in certain papers that after the war the Colonies would have a larger share in their administration. The speaker said if that was a settled fact, Indians ought to have a share in the administration of India... Mr. L. Curtis, who was present on the platform, had written many books, and the speaker had gathered that his view was that India ought to have a voice in the administration of the Empire, and if that was his object, the speaker said, it was certainly a laudable object.

Moulvi Fazl-ul-Haque of Bengal, seconding the resolution in Urdu, said that all races of India wanted home rule. Hindus, Christians, Jains, Parsis, all wanted it. Why should Mahommedans not have it ? If they wanted it equally, then there was no need for discussion on the subject.

At the request of the President, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu addressed the League on Hindu-Mussulman unity, and said that self-government or government of the people by the people was in the hands of the people, and the co-operation of the two great communities in India was an augury that the time was not far off when they would realize their dream of home rule.

Syed Alay Nabi, supporting the resolution, said that by accepting the Joint Reform Scheme both Hindus and Mahommedans had shown the world the unity of the two great nations of India, and it was the first step which would lead them to the altar of self-government.

Mr. Yaqub Husain, Mr. Mohd. Umar and Nawab Nasir Husain Khiyal also supported the resolution, which was then carried with great enthusiasm.

While Mr. A. Rasul was speaking on the self-Government resolution, Sir James Meston, Lieutenant-Governor, accompanied by Sir Verney Lovett and Mr. L. Curtis, arrived at the meeting and was accorded a most cordial reception, the whole assembly rising from their seats. After Mr. Rasul had concluded his address, Mr. Jinnah addressing Sir James said that he considered it his duty as President of the Ninth Session of All-India Muslim League to accord to him the most cordial welcome amongst them, and His Excellency's presence amongst them, as the head of the Local Government, was a clear mark and indication of the Government's desire to understand their opinions and their feelings.

Sir James Meston, who, on rising to speak, was received with deafening cheers, said : 'Mr. President and members of the All-India Muslim League, there are in this interesting gathering too many old friends to make it necessary that I should express my acknowledgment and the great pleasure with which I recieved your invitation to be present to-day and the still greater at the welcome which you have accorded Sir Verney Lovett and myself. It is not possible for me to discuss or even to express an opinion on the subjects which you have gathered together to discuss this morning. But it is possible for me, as the Head of the Province in which the Mussulmans occupy a large and

important place, and also as, I may say, I am an old and sincere friend of the Mussulmans (loud applause)—it is possible for me in these capacities to offer you welcome to Lucknow and to express a fervent hope that on the subjects which now come before you for consideration, your deliberation will be guided by wisdom and will not overlook, and will not subordinate to any meaner aim, the primary duty of the advancement of the increasing welfare and happiness of the great community which you represent. I sincerely thank you all (loud applause).

RESOLUTION III

The All-India Muslim League authorises its Council to appoint a committee consisting of not more than 15 persons which should undertake all necessary work in connection with the scheme of Reforms adopted at this Session.

It further authorizes the Council to organize a deputation of representative Mussulmans to go to England immediately after the war with a view to co-operate with the deputation that may be appointed by the Indian National Congress in order to press India's claim as outlined in the Joint Reform Scheme on the attention of the Government and the people of England.

The above resolution was proposed by the Raja of Jahangirabad, seconded by Mr. Sheriff Devji Kanji and supported by Khawaja Abdul Majid. It was carried by acclamation.

RESOLUTION IV

The All-India Muslim League is strongly of opinion that the invidious distinctions maintained among the different sections of His Majesty's subject under the Arms Act are extremely repugnant to the Indian's sense of justice and self-respect, and urges upon the Government the necessity of an early repeal of the said Act.

Mirza Sami-ul-lah Beg moved the above resolution. In urging the repeal of the Arms Act, he pointed out that it was to the interests of both the rulers and the ruled to repeal the Arms Act immediately. Mr. A. M. Khawaja, seconding the resolution, said that their self-restraint in this matter was being exhausted, and he would urge the repeal of the Act without any delay. The resolution was carried.

RESOLUTION V

The All-India Muslim League places on record once more, its strong protest against the continuance of the Press Act on the statute-book, which has proved in practice to be a harsh and oppressive measure and has rendered the free expression of public opinion practically impossible. The League is

emphatically of opinion that the said Act should be entirely repealed at an early date.

Mr. Mumtaz Hussain moved the above resolution. The mover demanded the repeal of the Press Act and said that the passing of such an Act created discontent instead of removing it. He added that because of the Press Act, the newspapers did not publish the whole truth, with the result that even when the news of a British victory was published, it was looked at with a certain amount of doubt.

In seconding the resolution, Dr. Nasir-ud-Din Hasan said that the Act was applied to the *Comrade*; but he ventured to say that if the Government had carried out the suggestions made in that admirable paper, they would not have seen the days they were witnessing at present. The resolution was carried.

RESOLUTION VI

The All-India Muslim League views with dismay the present administration of the Defence of India Act as constituting a grave menace to the liberties of the subject and recommends that an advisory committee be appointed in every province to consider the case of every person intended to be dealt with under the Act.

Mr. Abdul Qasim moved the above resolution. He said that though the Act was passed as a war emergency measure, in Bengal this Act had placed a fresh weapon in the hands of the CID. His grievance was that Government were being misled by the CID. They could not believe that men of culture and patriotism of the type of Mr. Mohammad Ali, Mr. Shaukat Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others would, at any time, dream of driving the British out of India or do anything unpatriotic. The CID had to justify their existence, and finding a few cases of sedition, they took advantage of Government measures and were creating disaffection among people. They had very few public spirited leaders among them, and they were being dealt with, one by one, under the Act. The Administration of the Act had brought about such results that no man came forward to do the work of mercy as every man was afraid of the CID. Hafiz Abdul Aziz seconded the resolution.

The President said that before he put the resolution to the vote, he wished to announce that message after message had been sent to him to urge Mr. Bepin Chander Pal to speak on it.

Mr. Pal was then invited to speak. He said that 25 years ago he could not have dreamt of being asked to speak by the Muslims. Why 25 even 10 years ago, even five years ago, he was afraid, they would have been as much afraid of him as some people still were. His objection to the Act was that it was not in favour of the defence of India; it was, instead, an Act which actually, really and deeply injured the cause of the defence of India. He said there were no anarchists in Bengal, and his

observation was received with deafening applause. They were revolutionary patriots. Revlutionary patriotism would never be born if there were no attempt to stifle evolutionary patriotism. The Act stifled evolutionary patriotism. There was not one respectable family, high or low, in educated Bengal which was not directly or indirectly affected by internments, and even after acquitable by courts of justice, young men were rearrested and interned. Did such measures of statesmanship create a temper to lead people to quite judge the guilt or innocence of those young men ? He asked the meeting to fancy who were the men interned. One of them was the nephew of Sir Ashutosh Mukerji. Could the Government not have seen Sir Ashutosh and placed evidence against his nephew before him. If Sir Ashutosh had then said that the evidence was unimpeachable, the whole country would say so. But the Government would not do that. They would not trust the people, and that distrust was due to a conflict of interests. That conflict could be removed by one thing only, and that was self-government or home rule. Somebody had said he wanted England always to rule India; but Mr. Pal said, amidst loud applause, that he did not want anybody to rule India for ever. The only person he wanted to rule was ALLAH. He did not want foreign rule. He wanted an honourable, perpetual connection, a federal connection, a great Indo-British Empire, and this would dominate, not by arms but by character; the whole world civilization. They would keep Asia and Europe in the hollow of their hands. That was the obvious ideal worth living for and dying for (loud applause).

The resolution was carried.

RESOLUTION VII

The All-India Muslim League records the deep sorrow and pain that have been caused to the entire Muslim community by the internment of Messers Mahommad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Zafar Ali Khan, whose great services to the Muslim cause have placed them in the front rank of Muslim public workers. In view of the fact that no definite charges have been brought against any of these gentlemen, the League prays the Government to restore them to liberty, thereby earning the deep gratitude of the Mussulmans of India.

Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haque proposed the above resolution. He said even the meanest man has a right of knowing the charge against him, but these great men were not told what the charges against them were. He challenged any Government official to say that they were seditious or undesirable people. He asked the Muslims of India to remember that no one was safe if these three men were not safe. They ought to raise their protests at the top of their voice. They ought to wait on His Excellency Lord Chelmsford and demand from him their release. He asked them to mark the word 'demand' from the Viceroy the release of these three gentlemen.

Syed Nabi-ul-lah, seconded the resolution. In doing so, he urged the Government to save the Muslim community from drifting into seditious propaganda by releasing these gentlemen.

The resolution was further supported by Mr. Yakub Hasan Seth and Mr. R. M. Ghulam Husain, and was then carried.

RESOLUTION VIII

Resolved that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad be given trial on charges made against him by the Government of Bihar and Orissa, and that the League is of opinion that the order, *of internment were unjustified.*

This resolution was not on the agenda, but was brought forward at the desire of the members. Mr. A. K. Fazl-ul-Haque, moving the resolution, gave a detailed history of how the orders were passed against the Maulana by the Bengal Government, ordering him to leave the Presidency, and how the Government agreed to rescind the order on receiving a petition from 15,000 Mahommedans and a guarantee given by the Muslim leaders of Bengal that the Maulana would not do anything that would give offence to Government.

With reference to the charge made by the Bihar Government, he said that the Maulana had publicly repudiated the charge, and it was the duty of the Government now to give him an opportunity of clearing himself of the charge.

The resolution was seconded by Maulvi Syed Fazl-ur-Rahman, and carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION IX

The League views with alarm the recent activities displayed in certain quarters to displace Urdu from the legitimate position it occupies as the Lingua Franca of India, and impresses, on all those interested in the growth and formation of Indian nationality, the desirability of encouraging Urdu, which alone can be the common language of the country.

The resolution was proposed by Maulvi Wahid Husain, seconded by Mr. Alay Nabi and supported by Mr. Zahur Ahmad.

The resolution was then put to the vote and carried.

RESOLUTION X

The All-India Muslim League, voicing the Muslim Public opinion, adheres to the principle of separate representation for the Muslim community, expresses satisfaction at the passing of the U. P. Municipalities Act, which accepts that principle, and strongly urges upon the Government the necessity of applying the said principle to local bodies in other provinces where it has not yet been applied.

This resolution was proposed by Nawab Mir Asad Ali Khan and seconded by Maulvi Tufail Ahmad.

The resolution was carried.

RESOLUTION XI

The All-India Muslim League urges upon the Government the desirability of throwing open the higher posts and commissioned ranks in the army to the Indians as well as to allow them to enlist as volunteers.

This resolution was proposed by Mr. Shahid Husain and seconded by Mr. Yaqub Hasan Seth. It was then carried.

RESOLUTION XII

The All-India Muslim League records its protest against the illiberal and retrograde provision embodied in the Patna University Bill, and strongly urges its amendment with a view to bringing it in line with the educated Indian opinion and make it a really useful measure for the progress of higher education in the Province.

The resolution was proposed by Mr. A. Rasul and seconded by Dr. Syed Mahmud, and was then carried.

The following resolutions (XIII, XIV, XV) were put from the Chair and then adopted.

RESOLUTION XIII

In the opinion of the All-India Muslim League, the general principles on which the assessment of revenue is based should form part of the Revenue Laws as recommended by the Decentralization Commission, and the limit of enhancement of assessment and the period for which settlement is made should be definitely laid down.

RESOLUTION XIV

The All-India Muslim League, in view of the persistent and unanimous demand on the part of all the sections of the people of India for the separation of the executive and judicial functions, is of opinion that the Government should be pleased to take early steps to bring into effect the desired reform.

RESOLUTION XV

The All-India Muslim League thinks it absolutely necessary for good and efficient administration that all the Indian provinces at present under Lieutenant-Governors should be placed in charge of Governors appointed

direct from England and that provincial executive councils should be established where they do not exist at present. The League further urges the appointment of Governor-in-Council in the United Provinces as soon as possible.

RESOLUTION XVI

The All-India Muslim League urges upon the Government the necessity of granting facilities to Mussulmans having business in Courts to perform the Jumma and midday prayers. The resolution was proposed by Maulvi Mohammad Yaqub, seconded by Hakim Abdul Qawi and supported by Munshi Ehtisham Ali.

The resolution was passed.

RESOLUTION XVII

The All-India Muslim League strongly urges upon the Government the necessity of taking immediate steps for the establishment of the promised university at Dacca.

The resolution was proposed by Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhri. In proposing the resolution, he said :

Gentlemen, this question of a university at Dacca, may assure you at the very outset, has a peculiar fascination for me. I may say that there has been hardly any other subject connected with the Eastern Bengal which has engaged so much of my serious attention during the last few years as this one. I strongly believe that on the speedy and the right solution of this question depends the very future of the Muslim community of Eastern Bengal.

You may remember that the proposal of a university for Eastern Bengal at first originated from no less a personage than Lord Hardinge. The announcement of the annulment of the partition of Bengal in 1911 had thrown the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal into a state of abject despair. To conciliate the Mussulmans and to soothe their ruffled feelings, Lord Hardinge came down to Dacca and, in a reply to the Mohammedan deputation headed by me, he gave a distinct promise to us, in unequivocal terms, of a university for Eastern Bengal, which might go a long way to minimize the evils attendant on a reversal to the old order of things. How for this and the other promises and concession Lord Hardinge made a time could reasonably be construed to have satisfied the Mussulmans and reconciled them to a distinctly disadvantageous position, it is not for me at this time to say. At all events, the promise of a university was taken as an earnest and a strong desire on the part of the Government to do something for the people whom they had been obliged; under the pressure of a most unfortunate combination of circumstances, to deprive of a valuable means of progress and prosperity.

For, after all, it was education that the Mussulmans most cared for. If the partition of Bengal was of any immediate substantial benefit to them, it was in this that it afforded them a number of facilities for the expansion of Muslim education in that Province. Under the prepartition days, in spite of their predominant majority in population, they were the most backward in education. I do not want to say who were in the main responsible for it. Possibly the community itself. But this let me be permitted to say, and it is recognized on all hands, that it was only the partition and the changes of circumstances brought about by it that gave the Mussulmans that sense of security and freedom without which real progress was impossible.

During the six years of separate administration they enjoyed from 1905 to 1911, the progress they made in education was simply marvellous. In this very short period of time, the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal showed the outside world that, given a liberal Government devoted to the interests of the people and protection from every possible baneful extraneous influence, the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal could, as being the members of the great Islamic community, appreciate the value of education as much as, and even more than, any other community in India or elsewhere. For it was really a most remarkable change that had come over us in Eastern Bengal in this short duration. Education had increased tenfold and even more. I do not at present intend to take you into any details of the improvement brought about in Eastern Bengal during these days and trouble you with any statistics; for I have a mind to move a similar resolution in the Imperial Council during the next sessions at Delhi. But let me say here that without Partition and the separate administration for Eastern Bengal, the Mussulmans would have continued to remain what they were before, an ignorant uncared for lot, with no opportunity to raise their position and status in the country and to advance abreast of the sister communities. Lord Hardinge therefore knew full well that when he was obliged to deprive them of the separate administration, he was taking away from them the surest means of their educational advancement, and that if nothing was done to compensate them for this loss, he would be clearly undoing the marvellous self-improvement which the Mussulmans had wrought in the field of education. And in order that a reversal to the old state of things might not deprive the Mussulmans of the benefit of their hard labours during these six years and relegate them again to a backward position, he was good enough to promise an effective safeguard in the shape of a residential university, which would necessarily resuscitate the progress they had already made and even accelerate it.

Gentlemen, this promise made about five years back on a most solemn occasion still remains unfulfilled. It has been reiterated by the local government time after time. But nothing as yet has come out of these promises. There are many madarsas in Eastern Bengal, larger in number than you find in any other part of India. As religious education is most cared for in Eastern Bengal, the flower of our youth flocks to these Arabic institutions. In

order that they might not be lost to the proposed university and that they also might be given the benefit of English education, we requested the Government to introduce into the curricula of these institutions a provision for the study of English side by side with Arabic; so that when the university was established at Dacca, the students that would pass through these reformed madarsas might be taken into the university in which a special faculty of arts, going by the name of Islamic studies, might be instituted for them. The Government of Lord Carmichael, with its characteristic sympathy and solicitude for the welfare of the people of Bengal, readily accepted our prayers. A system of special Matriculation for these Arabic students has been established and is in full force. In 1919 the first examination under this system will be held, and I am at a loss to understand what is to become of those who will come out successful in that examination if, in the meanwhile, the Dacca university is not established. I have repeatedly drawn the attention of His Excellency Lord Carmichael and other high educational officers, both in Bengal and in the Government of India, to the necessity of a speedy establishment of the university. Everyone, I may say, sympathizes with us, but brings in the plea of want of funds, the continuation of the war and so forth for the postponement of its establishment.

Gentlemen, to this line of argument, I need hardly give an answer; I am sure every one of you knows it by this time. The government has, in these days of war and abnormal expenditure, money enough to raise a High Court at Patna and a university as well there. The Government has money enough to help these and other movements. But when it comes to the question of the Dacca university, the old story is repeated, not realizing perhaps how unjust it appears to the people of Eastern Bengal, for both Hindus and Mussulmans are one on this question. Calcutta University is so hopelessly crowded and has become so unwieldy that the necessity for more universities has become imperative, as I have in detail explained in my last speech at Simla on the occasion of the introduction of the Patna University Bill into the Imperial Council. *The Herald*, which is a responsible organ of Hindu public opinion, has with a singleness of aim devoted itself to the cause of a university for Eastern Bengal. The whole body of public opinion in Eastern Bengal is for it. But the government asks us to wait. Whether we have not waited sufficiently long it is for you, gentlemen, to decide. For want of a Muslim College as provided in the Dacca University Scheme, and for want of regular boarding house, the Mussulman collegiate students of Dacca, who at present number over 200 and who, I may in passing say, were but about 10 at the time of Partition in 1905, are put to diverse difficulties. With this state of affairs, I do not know how we can really afford to wait for the university for any considerable time, as the Government could desire. I do not wish to say more. I trust you will kindly see your way to accord to the resolution I have moved your whole hearted unanimous support.

Before I sit down gentlemen, I wish to impress on you that the Dacca University, when it comes into being, will be an asset of utmost value to the cause of the community not only in East Bengal but throughout India – for in its scope, it will be of a unique nature. It will present to the Muslim and the Hindu students the invaluable treasures of their glorious and historic past side by side with treasures from English literature and England's history. It will, with but slight effort on the part of both the communities, secure to them a Muslim Hindu university on perhaps a better footing than the proposed university at Aligarh or the one proposed at Banaras.

Gentlemen, I again commend this resolution for your acceptance.

The following resolutions were put from the Chair and were then carried.

RESOLUTION XVIII

(a) In the opinion of the All-India Muslim League it is essential that the system of indentured labour be terminated and all recruitment therefore prohibited within the ensuing year.

(b) The League is further of opinion that at least one representative Indian, selected upon the recommendation of bodies voicing Indian public opinion, be appointed by the Government of India to participate in the forthcoming inter-departmental conference to be held in England for the consideration of the question.

RESOLUTION XIX

In respect of the treatment and status of British Indian residents in the self-governing dominions and the Crown colonies, League the desires again to emphasize the growing sense of injury felt in India at the continued ill-treatment and injustice meted out to the Indians, resident in those Dominions, and Crown Colonies and strongly urges the statesmen and people thereof, having regard to the closer Imperial relations that have been reached during the present war, to consider the status of the Indian settlers there from a wider and more Imperial stand-point.

RESOLUTION XX

With regard to the proposal of the Secretary of State for India inviting two specially elected representatives from India to assist him in the forthcoming Special Imperial Conference to a series of special and continuous sittings of the War Cabinet, in order to consider war questions and to prosecute the war vigorously, this League urges that at least two representatives of India, to be elected by the elected members of the Imperial and various Provincial Councils, be allowed to represent India directly and not

merely to assist the Secretary of State for India.

RESOLUTION XXI

The All-India Muslim League places on record its appreciation of the sentiments conveyed in the message of the Prime Minister to the princes and peoples of India, and fully shares in the determination of the British peoples to bring the war to a triumphant issue, but regrets that larger use has not been made of the manpower of India and urges the raising of an army immediately in India from the whole population under Indian commissioned officers.

RESOLUTION XXII

The All-India Muslim League places on record its full confidence in the present President and Honorary Secretary of the League and its deep appreciation of the services rendered by them to the Muslim cause.

Khan Bahadur Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhri, proposing this resolution, remarked :

The services rendered by Raja Saheb, the President of the League, to the country and the community are well known to us. I have nothing more to add.

The progress made by the League during the Secretaryship of the Hon'ble Mr. Wazir Hasan was substantial and very encouraging, and does not stand in need of being reiterated. He gives us materials to 'enable us to think out for ourselves and to draw a line between the duties of the people in their relation to the Government of the country, and duties of the people to themselves in relation to their own advancement. During his time, the constitution of the League was changed and the ideal of the League defined. According to the changed Constitution the League undertook the duties which it hitherto hesitated to take upon itself as the League. The League stands today rejuvenated and the Indian communities are united.

Nawab Mir Asad Ali seconded the resolution. He said :

The Hon'ble Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad, the President of the League, sits enthroned in our hearts.

The self-sacrifice of the Hon'ble Mr. Wazir Hasan, his firmness among raging billows and unflinching devotion to the cause of the community and country have endeared him to us.

Mr. Sheriff D. Kanji, supporting the resolution, remarked that during the Secretaryship of Mr. Wazir Hasan, the bonds of sympathy and love that ought to exist between the different communities have been cemented. The Muslim league and the Congress were now working hand in hand for the good of the country.

The resolution was put to the vote and carried by acclamation.

ELECTIONS

The following gentlemen were proposed by Mr. Wazir Hasan and seconded by Mr. Sheriff D. Kanji, for re-election as Vice-Presidents of the All-India Muslim League :

1. Raja Sir Mohammad Tasadduq Rasul Khan, K.C.S.I., of Jahangirabad.
2. Nawab Abdul Majid Sahib, C.I.E., Bar-at-Law, Allahabad.
3. Sir Carim Bhoy Ibrahim, Bart., Bombay.
4. Sir Fazal Bhoy Carim Bhoy, Kt., Bombay.
5. Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhri, Khan Bahadur, Bengal.
6. Khan Bahadur H.M. Malak, Nagpur.
7. Mr. Abdul Karim Abdul Shakur Jamal, C.I.E., Rangoon.
8. Haziq-ul-Mulk Hakim Ajmal Khan, Delhi.
9. Nawab Fateh Ali Khan Qazilbash, C.I.E., Lahore.
10. Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Khan, C.S.I., Bar-at-Law, Lahore.
11. Sir Malik Omar Hayat Khan Tiwana, K.C.I.E., M.V.O., Punjab.
12. Khan Bahadur Mian Mohammad Shafi, C.I.E., Bar-at-Law, Lahore.
13. Mr. Abdul Aziz, Bar-at-Law, Peshawar.

As soon as Mr. Shafi's name was read, there were loud shouts of 'No, No', from all sides, and accordingly Mr. Shafi's name was dropped from the list. The others were re-elected.

The following gentlemen were also elected Vice-Presidents of the All-India Muslim League :

1. Sir Ibrahim Rahmat-ul-lah, Kt., C.I.E., Bombay.
2. Sir Syed Ali Imam, K.C.S.I., Bar-at-Law, Bankipore.
3. Khan Bahadur Nawab Mir Asad Ali, Madras.

Mr. Nabi-ul-lah then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair, which was seconded by Mr. A.K. Fazal-ul-Haque. A suitable reply from the President, including exhortations to the Mussulmans to do their duty, brought the proceedings to a close at about 9 p.m.

Source : Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. I.

26

'THE TRIBUNE' ON THE NINTH SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA MUSLEM LEAGUE

The last session of the All-India Muslim League is undoubtedly a memorable one. It marks a new era in the progress of the Mahommedans of this country, and has also lent a new spirit to the communal activities and ideals of others. At one time each of these communities laboured under a

sense of mistrust of one another, but thanks to the high ideal of India's unity advocated by the Indian National Congress, a spirit of co-operation and self-confidence has now come over them. The Hon'ble Mr. Mahomed Ali Jinnah, in the course of his presidential address delivered at the All-India Muslim League, expressed his pleasure at the happy relationship broughtout about between Hindus and Mahommedans and congratulated both on the unity thus established. Referring to the old spirit of communal jealousy and narrow outlook still lingering among a few individuals, he said : 'Let us remember whether Hindus or Mussulmans, that new India wants a wholly different type of public workers, of more generous spirit and ample mould, free from the egoism of sect and the narrowness of bigotry, one who can resist the temptation to crush the eak and yet would not quail before the aggression of the strong, who can rise above the petty pre-occupations of the day to the higher plane of devotion and service which alone can give to a people faith, hope, freedom and power.' The triumph of having brought about a unity in India can only be fully understood by men of historical vision, men who understand how bitter and how tenacious the difference was for a long time. Those who can compare the Hindu-Moslem antagonism with the English controversies will not fail to understand the wisdom of the present compromise and the great benefits of the future.

Mr. Jinnah next pointed out the advance made by the community in its co-operation with the political ideals of the country. There was a time when politics were shunned and identification with the National Congress dreaded. But less than a decade of discussion, reflection and experience was enough to convince the community of the value and necessity of co-operation with the political ideals of the country. A few leading Mahommedans, who from the beginning identified themselves with the Congress, were farsighted men and Mr. Jinnah was among them. After referring to the war and the sacrifices made by Indians, Mr. Jinnah pointed out the political reforms needed in India which was the main subject of discussion and was upper-most in the public mind. The main problem in India explained by Mr. Jinnah was this : 'We have a powerful and efficient bureaucracy of British officers responsible only to the British Parliament, governing with methods known as benevolent despotism, a people that have grown fully conscious of their destiny and are peacefully struggling for political freedom.' Mr. Jinnah gave full credit to the officials who were doing their duty efficiently under the present system of Government, but pointed out that its chief defect was the growth of a class interest wholly opposed to the interest of the vast population of India. This has given rise to certain political prejudices and unfounded ideas about the people which are doing infinite harm to the progress and happiness of the people. Mr. Jinnah refuted some of those beliefs, *viz.*, that democratic institutions cannot thrive in the environment of the east; that the only form of Government suitable to India is autocracy; that the interests of the educated classes are opposed to those of the masses; and that Indians are unfit to govern

themselves. These 'baseless and silly generalities', as Mr. Jinnah called them, have been falsified thoroughly by Congress leaders; and if the interested officials and others still persist in their views, it is because they do not wish to part with their power and prestige. Against selfishness the prejudice of this kind it is useless to argue, but high minded statesmen in England are not likely to be misled by these any longer; and the after war problems of India should be solved in a more lofty spirit of Imperial ideal and British patriotism than the bulk of Indian officials are prepared to do.

One main fact which comes out of these discussions, Mr. Jinnah points out, *is that India is for Indians and nobody can deny this claim. Whatever happens it is clear that Indians cannot be deprived of this claim and our efforts should be directed to obtain recognition to this immediately after the war.* Lord Hardinge and Lord Chelmsford have both spoken in sympathy with this ideal; and we all know that His Excellency the Viceroy has stated to an American interviewer that his object in India is to secure a definite recognition to the political economic ideals stirring the minds of the Indian people. Mr. Jinnah pointed out that as regards the fitness of Indians for self-government, the same tests that were applied to other units of the Empire should be applied to India. Whether this is done or not, the people of India are determined to strive to realise their ideal. A very moderate scheme of reforms has been proposed to Government, but now by the united efforts of the Congress and the League a new bill is proposed to be prepared and introduced into the Parliament to secure a definite recognition to the political and economic ideals stirring the mind of the Indian people. This scheme has been approved and it marks a definite advance in the political activities of the country which has passed from propaganda to action. In future we have to work on more active lines; for though the Government may do something to pacify Indians, past experience shows us that the bureaucracy has subtle ways of defeating legitimate reforms. Mr. Jinnah deplored the fact that even at the present moment, when the Government of India was preparing a despatch for the political reforms of India, none of the Indian leaders has been taken into confidence and consulted on the main issues, whereas in dealing with the Colonies on a similar subject quite a different attitude is shown by the authorities. It is this unfortunate distrust of Indians that has created the profound discontent that has found expression in the Congress and League. A change of attitude on the part of the Government is absolutely necessary. They must recognise that a new spirit has taken hold of the people and they are not prepared to submit to disappointing schemes in future as they did in the past. The Moslem League has, by its whole-hearted co-operation with the Congress, made it possible to adopt for a more active campaign to obtain self-government on constitutional lines; and we have every hope of winning the approval and sympathy of those disinterested British Statesmen who recognise that India is an inavaluable asset of the British Empire and are prepared to do to this country what they did and will do to the subjects of their own race in

other parts of the world.

Source : The Tribune, 3 January, 1917.

27

LETTER FROM SIR JAMES MESTON TO CHELMSFORD REGARDING *THE CONGRESS-LEAGUE SESSIONS AT LUCKNOW*

11 January 1917

...there were over 20 other conferences, social, religious and commercial; but they were all ancillary to the two big gatherings. Lucknow was crowded and cosmopolitan beyond all knowledge. I never saw so great a concourse of educated middle-class Indians, so thoroughly enjoying themselves. The Congress has become a great national anniversary full of excitement and intellectual amusement.

The Moslem League may be quickly disposed of. After the preliminary discussions at Calcutta it had become a certainty that the League would capitulate to the Congress on the Hindu politician's own terms. There was no time to contest this decision, and the older public men among Mahommedans, with hardly an exception, stayed away. There were mutterings of schism, but no definite breaking away. The more soberminded men simply made an excuse of attending Educational Conference at Aligarh. When I visited the League meeting although the Home Rule Resolution was in full blast there was no heat, no, enthusiasm. The hall was relatively small, and there were many empty benches. The speakers were laying themselves out to amuse the meeting, rather than talking serious politics.... The League, as a representative of genuine Mahommedan feeling, has collapsed, and is merely doing the bidding of the Congress. I am not sure that this state of affairs can last but we have to accept the fact for the time being, that on paper the Mahommedans have now come into the Nationalist camp.

'The Congress was a very different affair, and its meetings were decidedly impressive. I attended it by invitation on one of its busy days.... Everything was in good order and well organised, the speakers careful, and the audience keen alert, taking the points quickly and in the best of temper with themselves. The attendance of delegates was the largest on record and I suppose that there must have been not less than 7,000 or 8,000 people in Pandal....

Whatever reservations we may read in their proceedings, the fact remains that the Extremists and Moderates have again joined hands, and

that they have achieved the remarkable feat of captuᵣing the advanced Mahommedans....

It is a great personal triumph for Tilak and his enormous popularity as a national hero was apparent at every turn.... That the domination of the Extremists has been restored, and that there is a complete landslide amorg the Moderates, is perfectly obvious.

...The Extremist has a definite programme, impracticable perhaps, but appealing keenly to the pride of the people. The Moderate has no particular creed except trust in Government.

...The vital question for us is, will the Moderates rally to the side of Government and show some political courage and power of resistance, if Government does disclose a policy which can be weighed, article for article, against the manifestoes of the Extremists ? Many of my Indian friends think that they will, but that no time should be lost in calling upon them. Meanwhile what we have undoubtedly got to face is that the British public and the House of Commons will be told, with every appearance of veracity, that at last the whole political opinion of India—both wings of the Hindus, and all that is vital and progressive among Mahommedans presents a united front in its demand, for reforms.... The situation is as most of us here see it, one of considerable seriousness, and I should like... to put this aspect before you later, with... reference to your policy of the goal and its approaches.

Source : Chelmsford Papers : Correspondence with Persons in India, 1917.

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SCHEME OF POST-WAR REFORMS PREPARED AND ADOPTED BY THE CONGRESS AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE, 1916

I. PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

1. Provincial Legislative Council shall consist of four-fifths elected and of one-fifth nominated members.

2. Their strength shall be not less than 125 members in the major provinces, and from 50 to 75 in the minor provinces.

3. The members of the Councils should be elected directly by people on as broad a franchise as possible.

4. Adequate provision should be made for the representation of important minorities by election, and that the Mahommedans should be represented through special electorates on the Provincial Legislative Councils in the

following proportions :

Punjab	50 per cent of the elected Indian Members
United Provinces	30 per cent of the elected Indian Members
Bengal	40 per cent of the elected Indian Members
Bihar	25 per cent of the elected Indian Members
Central Provinces	15 per cent of the elected Indian Members
Madras	15 per cent of the elected Indian Members
Bombay	33⅓ per cent of the elected Indian Members

Provided that Mahommedans shall not participate in any of the other elections to the Imperial or Provincial Legislative Councils, save and except those by electorates representing special interests.

Provided further that no bill, nor any clause thereof, nor a resolution introduced by a non-official member affecting one or the other community, which question 15 to be determined by the members of that community in the Legislative Council concerned, shall be proceeded with, if three-fourths of the members of that Community in the particular Council, Imperial or Provincial, oppose the bill or any class thereof on the resolution.

5. The head of the Provincial Government should not be the President of the Legislative Council but the Council should have the right of electing its President.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions should not be restricted to the members putting the original question, but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7. (*a*) Except customs, post, telegraph, mint, salt, opium, railways, army and navy, and tributes from Indian states, all other sources of revenue should be provincial.

(*b*) There should be no divided heads of revenue. The Government of India should be provided with fixed contribution from the Provincial Governments, such fixed contributions being liable to revision when extraordinary and unforeseen contingencies render such revision necessary.

(*c*) The Provincial Council should have full authority to deal with all matters affecting the internal administration of the province including the power to raise loans, to impose and alter taxation, and to vote on the Budget. All items of expenditure and all proposals concerning ways and means for raising the necessary revenue, should be embodied in Bills and submitted to the Provincial Council for adoptation.

(*d*) Resolutions on all matters within the purview of the Provincial Government should be allowed for discussion in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself.

(*e*) A resolution passed by the Legislative Council shall be binding on the Executive Government unless vetoed by the Governor in Council provided however that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

(*f*) A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a definite matter of urgent public importance if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

8. Any special meeting of the Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members.

9. A Bills other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance with the rules made in that behalf by the Council itself and the consent of the Government should not be required therefor.

10. All Bill passed by Provincial Legislatures shall have to receive the assent of the Governor before they become law, but may be vetoed by the Governor-General.

The term of office of the members shall be five years.

II. PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

1. The head of every Provincial Government shall be a Governor who shall not ordinarily belong to the Indian Civil Service or any of the permanent services.

2. There shall be in every Province an Executive Council which, with the Governor, shall constitute the Executive Government of the Province.

3. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Councils.

4. Not less than one-half of the members of Executive Council shall consist of Indians to be elected by the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Councils.

5. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

III. IMPERIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

1. The strength of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be 150.

2. Four-fifths of the members shall be elected.

3. The franchise for the Imperial Legislative Council should be widened as far as possible on the lines of the present electorates and the elected members of the Provincial legislative councils should also form an electorate for the return of Members to the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. One-third of the Indian elected members should be Mahommedans elected by separate Mahommedan electorates in the several provinces, in the proportion, as may be, in which they are represented on the Provincial Legislative Councils by separate Mahommedan electorates.

Vide provisos to Section I, clause 4.

5. The President of the Council shall be elected by the Council itself.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions shall not be restricted to the members putting the original question but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7. Any special meeting of the Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members.

8. A Bill, other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself, and the consent of the Executive Government should not be required therefor.

9. All Bills passed by the Council shall have to receive the assent of the Governor-General before they become law.

10. All financial proposals relating to sources of income and items of expenditure shall be embodied in Bills. Every such Bill and the Budget as a whole shall be submitted for the vote of the Imperial Legislative Council.

11. The term of office of members shall be five years.

12. The matters mentioned herein below shall be exclusively under the control of the Imperial Legislative Council :

(*a*) Matters in regard to which uniform legislation for the whole of India is desirable.

(*b*) Provincial legislation is so far as it may affect inter-provincial fiscal relations.

(*c*) Questions affecting purely Imperial Review, excepting tributes from Indian states.

(*d*) Questicns affecting purely Imperial expenditure except that no resolution of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be binding on the Governor-General in Council in respect of military changes for the defence of the country.

(*e*) The right of revising Indian tariffs and customs-duties, of imposing, altering, or removing any tax or cess, modifying the existing system of currency and banking, and granting any aids or bounties to any or all deserving and nascent, industries of the country.

(*f*) Resolutions on all matters relating to the administration of the country as a whole.

13. A resolution passed by the Legislative Council should be binding on the Executive Government unless vetoed by the Governor-General in Council; provided how ever that if the Resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

14. A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a definite matter of urgent public importance, if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

15. When the Crown chooses to exercise its power of veto in regard to a Bill passed by a Provincial Legislative Council or by the Imperial Legislative Council, it should be exercised within twelve months from the date on which it is passed, and the Bill shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the fact of such veto is made known to the Legislative Council concerned.

16. The Imperial Legislative Council shall have no power to interfere with the Government of India's direction of the military affairs and the foreign political relations of India, including the declaration of war, the

making of peace and the entering into treaties.

IV. THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

1. The Governor-General of India will be the head of the Government of India.

2. He will have an Executive Council, half of whom shall be Indians.

3. The Indian members should be elected by the elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Council of the Governor-General.

5. The power of making all appointments in the Imperial Civil Services shall vest in the Government of India, due regaid being paid to existing interests, subject to any laws that may be made by the Imperial Legislative Council.

6. The Government of India shall not ordinarily interfere in the local affairs of a province, and poweis not specifically given to Provincial Government, shall be deemed to be vested in the former. The authority of the Government of India will ordinarily be limited to general supervision and superintendence over the Provincial Governments.

7. In legislative and administrative matter the Government of India as constituted under this scheme shall as far as possible, be independent of the Secretary of State.

8. A system of independent audit of the accounts of the Government of India should be instituted.

V. THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN COUNCIL

1. The Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished.

2. The salary of the Secretary of State should be place on the British Estimates.

3. The Secretary of State should, as far possible, occupy the same position in relation to the Government of India as the Secretary of State for the Colonies in relation to the Governments of the self-governing dominions.

4. The Secretary of State for India should be assisted by two permanent Under-Secretaries, one of whom should always be an Indian.

VI. INDIA AND THE EMPIRE

1. In any council or other body which may be constituted or convened for the Settlement or Control of Imperial affairs, India shall be adequately represented in like manner with the Dominion and with equal rights.

2. Indians shall be placed on a footing of equality in respect of status and rights of citizenship with other subject of His Majesty the King through out the Empire.

VII. . MILITARY AND OTHER MATTERS

1. The military and naval services of His Majesty, both in their commissioned and non-commissioned ranks should be thrown open to Indians and adequate provision should be made for their selection, training and instruction in India.

2. Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers.

3. The Executive Officers in India shall have no judicial powers entrusted to them and the Judiciary in every Province shall be placed under the highest Court of that Province.

Source : **Report of the 31st Indian National Congress, 1916.**

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Eminent scholar, Dr. Shan Muhammad (b. 1937) took his doctorate in Political Science from the University of Allahabad and has done pioneering researches in the nationalist movement in India. His publications include *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan : A Political Biography; Writings and Speeches of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* and *Khaksar Movement in India.* Dr. Shan Muhammad's collection of documents on *The Aligarh Movement* (in three volumes) has been considered 'a boon to researchers to reach the basic materials'. The present study which runs into several volumes provides the results of his extensive study on the political attitudes of Indian Muslims in the present century.

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